A VALID CHRISTIANITY FOR TO-DAY

CHARLES D. WILLIAMS

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BY

CHARLES D. WILLIAMS, D.D., LL.D.

BISHOP OF MICHIGAN

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TO L. B. W.

PREFACE

This volume comprises a number of discourses delivered on various occasions and now published at the request of friends of the writer. A common title has been given the collection; for although the discourses reflect the variety of the occasions which they served and deal with different themes, yet in them all the preacher had in mind a single purpose; viz., to present a Christianity that is valid for to-day.

There are those who would establish the validity of our religion by proving the genuineness of its ancient sources and the unbrokenness of the channels which connect us with those sources. Consequently, they spend their efforts chiefly upon such matters as the authenticity of the Scriptures, — the Divine origin of the Church and its consequent authority to establish creeds and dogmas for doctrine and rules and canons for conduct, and demand acceptance of the one and obedience to the other, — the continuity of tradition and apostolic succession, etc. For them a valid Christianity is to be known by its *roots*.

But the mind of to-day is intensely practical, if not pragmatic. It insists that for it, at least, a valid Christianity is to be known, not by its *roots*, but by its *fruits*. It is saying, somewhat impa-

tiently sometimes, to the advocates of religion, "Granted for the sake of the argument (though we are by no means sure of it), the genuineness of your ancient springs and reservoirs and the unbrokenness of your aqueducts, what of it? The one question that concerns us is, "What is the character of the stream which reaches *us* from these sources and through these channels? Is it 'the water of life' to-day as it was of old? Can it quench the thirst of *our* souls? Can it still cleanse the uncleanness of the human heart? Can it invigorate our moral and ethical life? Can your ancient and venerable religion raise up a new generation of seers and prophets such as the age imperatively demands? Can it meet the need of a universal religion felt by an expanding and unifying world? Can it moralize our industrial, political, and commercial life and humanize our social life? Can it live with the expanding vision and increasing light of modern knowledge? Can it justify itself to the personal experience of the modern man as it did to the experience of the saints of old? If it can do these things, we will accept it as valid for to-day. If it cannot, we must reject it, no matter how authentic its origins and traditions." To this line of thought the preacher has sought to hew; hence the title chosen.

I desire to express my appreciation of the insistent interest of Mrs. James R. Garfield of Washington, D.C., to which interest alone the publication of this volume is due. I would also make grateful acknowledgment of my indebtedness to Rev.

Albert J. Nock, Ph.D., of Detroit and my secretary, Mr. Charles O. Ford, both of whom have bestowed much labor of love upon the preparation of the book; one in the way of literary criticism and revision of the discourses, and the other in the toilsome task of transcribing the manuscripts.

CHARLES D. WILLIAMS.

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A VALID CHRISTIANITY FOR TO-DAY

CHAPTER I

MEN OF VISION

Prov. xxix. 18. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

THE Revised Version renders our text, "Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint." That is, they lose respect for authority, regard for law and order. A literal translation would make it, "Where there is no vision, the people are unbound." That is, they become *dissolute* in the original sense of the word, — without any coherent unity. Perhaps a free rendering which would express both ideas is this, "Where there is no vision, the people become a mob."

There is a doctrinaire philosophy, much in vogue among us, which declares practically that a democracy has little or no need of leaders. It wants public servants only. "*Vox populi, vox Dei.*" The people have an unerring instinct for the right and the true. And all that is required of those who happen to be set in the front ranks is to "keep their ears to the

ground," listen for the indications of the popular will and then do its bidding without variation or hesitation, follow the crowd, go with the popular current. So will the people guide themselves to the goal of ideal democracy.

But, as I read history and human experience, nowhere is there such need for leadership as in a democracy. Mark the word: I say *leadership*, not mere authority. Blind obedience to a sovereign will is the characteristic of despotism though that will may be wise and the despotism beneficent. The intelligent following of intelligent leadership is the essential note of a true democracy. I believe with all my heart that the popular mind has an instinct for the right and the true. But that instinct is often dumb. It needs a voice wherewith to make distinct and definite utterances, that men may hear and recognize its validity. And that voice must proceed from those who think more clearly and accurately than the average man; who form positive convictions upon tested and trustworthy principles. The instinct is often blind. It needs vision to guide it aright. And that vision belongs to the men of discernment, of insight and foresight, who occupy higher viewpoints than the crowd, and who consequently see farther and wider than they.

Given such leadership, democracy is safe. For the popular mind and conscience will, in the long run, respond to it. How often in a great crisis there needs but the clear utterance of a true principle or the

bold uplifting of a noble and definite ideal in speech or action by some virile personality to win the enthusiastic allegiance of the people. They recognize instantly the thing they themselves have been long dumbly feeling and blindly groping after. Like a supersaturated liquid, the heart of the masses often holds unconsciously in solution an abundance of true sentiment which needs but the right touch to crystallize into definite principles of action.

Yes, democracy imperatively needs leadership. And to such leadership perhaps some of you who read these words are called; called by the Providence of God as expressed in the facts of your life, the sphere and position in which you found yourself at birth; and called again by the equipment which you have received for such a task and responsibility. The educated man is supposed to stand well to the front in whatever sphere he occupies. The test of his personal and social worth and also of the value and efficiency of his education lies in the answer which his life shall give to this question: Shall he be merely pushed along on his course by the pressure of circumstances or the blind instincts of the crowd behind him? Or shall he clearly discern and intelligently choose his goals and ideals and lead those who will follow him toward their attainment? It depends upon whether or not he has acquired and developed the qualities and faculties of leadership.

What qualifies a man for leadership? Not goodness and piety merely, but something else that is at

once more intellectual, more spiritual, and more virile. Let us see what it is. The ancient Hebrews had two names for their leaders in social development and ethical progress, in State and Church. They called them *prophets* or *seers*.

The prophet was not the mere predicter or foreteller of future events as he has popularly been esteemed. He was rather the "forthteller," the spokesman, the interpreter. He uttered the principles and convictions which he had grasped, or rather which had grasped him. He set forth in public speech and action the truth wherewith he had been inspired or, as the Quaker phrase puts it, the truth that "had been borne in upon him," in his moments of exaltation and solitary communion with God. But that gift of inspiration was not the monopoly of the prophet. Indeed, it was only in the degree that the same gift was shared by the people that his message was of avail. It was only as the popular conscience was sensitized by the same Spirit which inspired the prophet, that his message found response. It was only as the same truths had already been "borne in upon" the popular mind that the prophet found either hearers or followers. In many a humble heart the same great convictions and principles had long lain in vague and incoherent forms, dormant and dumb; until at last one clear voice gave them utterance, and then many a hearing soul rose up with new joy, and claimed them for its own, saying, "There is what I have long felt dimly but I

have never been able to put into words for myself. There is the truth, the ideal, I have long groped after blindly, but now I behold it in all its beauty. In thy light, O prophet, I see light. In thy voice I hear the command of my own conscience. Lead on and I follow." That is the test of every true leader and master of men; he utters plainly what others feel dimly. He interprets men to themselves, and so interprets God to them. For he articulates for them the voice of God which has long spoken perhaps incoherently in their own conscience and experience. That was the function of the prophet in Israel; and that is the function of the leader in a true democracy.

And the gift that qualifies for such leadership is the gift of vision.

We read in the first book of Samuel, "he that is now called prophet was beforetime called *seer*." That is the true order of development, first vision, then utterance; first the seer and then the prophet. And so our text sums up all the faculties and qualifications of leadership in that one great word vision, "where there is no vision, the people are a mob." They wander like sheep without a shepherd. "For if the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch?"

Yes, we need men of vision for our leaders. But who or what are men of vision?

They are not *visionaries*. There are plenty such on every side who offer themselves as guides. But they can lead to disaster only. The visionary —

we all know him: the half-baked, ill-trained enthusiast or fanatic; short-sighted, narrow-visioned, seeing only through the squint-hole of his preconceived theory; without the patience or ability to investigate the facts as they are, he invents his facts as according to his fancy they should be; he builds his little system with a blind, relentless, and mechanical logic upon a few hard and fast premises which perhaps have their origin solely in his own imagination; if the facts do not agree therewith, so much the worse for the facts. Upon this air-castle he places all his hopes for himself and for mankind until the great flood of stern realities sweeps it remorselessly away and leaves him homeless and houseless, without even a foothold. He who runs after him follows a will-of-the-wisp which can lead only into the Slough of Despond.

No, the true leader is not the visionary but the seer, the man of vision. What is vision? The word used in our text is a wonderfully rich and profound word. It is constantly used by the prophets, but it is often abused and misunderstood by their readers, and therefore needs defining. In my attempt at a definition I shall follow the suggestions of a great scholar and exegete, himself a prophet and seer, Dr. George Adam Smith. The word "vision" does not express any magical display before the eyes of the prophet of the very words which he was to speak to the people, or any communication to his thoughts by dream or ecstasy. The qualities which this

great word connotes are higher. There is, first of all, the power of forming an ideal, of seeing and describing a thing in the fulfilment of the promise and potency that are in it. But there are also two other powers of inward vision included in the word to which we give the names of "insight" and "intuition," — insight into human character, intuition of Divine principles; clear knowledge of what man *is* and how God *will* act; a keen discrimination in human affairs and an unreasoned conviction of moral truth and the Divine will. The original verb "to see" in the Hebrew from which the noun is derived, means "to cleave, to split"; then *to see into*, to see *through*, to get down beneath the surface of things and discern their real nature. Perhaps penetrativeness is the best word to describe this power, the keenness of the man who will not be deceived by an outward show that he delights to hold up to scorn, but who has a conscience for the inner worth of things and for their future consequences. To lay stress upon this moral meaning of the prophet's vision is not to grudge or diminish, but to emphasize its inspiration by God; because God's spirit acts and can act only upon and through the best and highest faculties. Of that inspiration the true prophet of every age is always assured; it is God's spirit that enables him to see thus keenly; for he sees things keenly, not only as men count keenness, — namely, as shrewdness, — but as God himself sees them, in their value in His sight and in

their attractiveness for His love and pity. He shares the vision of Him "who looks not on the outward appearance but searches the hearts of men." It is this vision of the Almighty Searcher and Judge, burning through man's pretence, with which the prophet feels himself endowed. These, then, are the three powers which constitute prophetic vision: first, the power of forming an ideal; second, the power to penetrate men's hearts as God Himself penetrates them, and constantly, without squint or blur, to see the eternal difference between right and wrong; and, third, the intuition of God's will, the perception of what line He will take in any given set of circumstances. High-sight or the perception of the ideal ; insight or discernment, discrimination; foresight or the understanding of the promise and potency of things and the lines of consequence; and to these may be added far and wide sight, the comprehension of a broad field of facts, — these are the elements of vision. This was the "vision" of the prophet of old. And this also is the vision of the true leader of men to-day.

Can this power of vision be acquired? In a sense it cannot. It is one of those gifts which the "Spirit divideth to every man severally as He wills." Like the poet, the true seer "is born and not made." The great elements of vision are largely the products of an original and immediate Divine inspiration which comes not at our bidding nor can be harnessed to our will. They are inbreathed into

men's souls by that mysterious Spirit which, like the wind, "bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth."

But yet we believe that this Spirit breathes upon every heart of man, and that each receives according to his capacity. The Spirit broods over the chaos of the densest and most confused soul. Consequently every man has in him the roots and rudiments of these Divine gifts. And it is the business, the one supreme business, of true education to evoke and develop those gifts. That is the final and crucial test of the value, the worth, the efficiency of any education. That is the meaning of the word. The purpose of education is to "educe," to lead out, marshal, train, and make efficient the original and inherent powers and faculties which God hath implanted in the man at birth. The fatal fault of a good deal of our so-called education is that it does not "educate." It suppresses far more than it educes. It chokes out and smothers many of the Divinest and noblest instincts and faculties of the natural man. It simply pours into the mind a quantity of alleged facts and informations, true or false, conventions and traditions of accepted theory and knowledge, and then rams the whole mass down like an asphalt or concrete pavement, until neither trees, nor flowers, nor even grass can find chance to grow. The original and Divine faculties and instincts of the man are overlaid. But true education

is the handmaid of the Lord. She is the Divine gardener. She plucks up by the roots "every plant that is not of His planting," the weeds of error and ignorance; but she carefully nurtures and cultivates all that is of His sowing until the man's whole being becomes as the garden of Eden which the Lord "planted, and not man." Such an education will develop the faculty of forming ideals; it will train the mind in the habits of clear, keen, accurate, and patient thinking; it will put a finer point upon the penetrativeness of natural discernment and discrimination; and, above all, it will sensitize at the same time that it clarifies and corrects the natural conscience. In a word, it will produce men of vision.

And ah, how we need such men on every plane of our common life to-day. For the multitudes wander like blind men groping for the King's highway, though it be so plain that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein!"

We need them in business, these men of vision. Every true American must hang his head in shame over the exposures of our recent investigations in the commercial world. Ruthless greed, downright lying, cunning craft, rank dishonesty, — these come dangerously near being the characteristic and typical American sins. They are so regarded in Europe. Our national emblem — according to the Continental caricaturist — should not be the keen-eyed eagle, but a composite animal made up of a hog and a fox. The towering figures in our financial world

seem sometimes like artificial Frankensteins, without heart or conscience, mere money-making machines in the form of men; or, if they have conscience, it is but of the disintegrated or dual sort, keen sometimes to the point of subtlety as to technical pieties and artificial proprieties, but callous, if not dead, to the first principles of common honesty and justice. For the squint of commercialism appears to have divided, if it has not blinded, the moral vision of these men.

We need educated men, in the truest sense of that word "educated," who will go into the commercial life of to-day, as into a high and holy calling; men with a new ideal of trade, who will see in it, not merely a means for the aggrandizement of the individual, feeding and fattening him with luxuries and setting him apart from his fellows upon a throne of tyrannous dominion over them, but a God-given mission and ministry of social service, a part of God's great scheme for a redeemed universe, a Divine order of human society; men of clear and keen insight who will get at the heart of the great realities that underlie this superficial business of buying and selling; who will discern the true relations of men and things; who will see that material wealth has value or meaning only as it builds up human wealth or well-being, and individual wealth only as it ministers to the common weal; who will know that men were not meant to be the slaves of things, but that things were meant to be the instruments and

tools of men; who will "put gold where it belongs, where it is in the new Jerusalem, a shining pavement beneath the feet, upon which the higher uses of life may move smoothly to and fro on their errands of human service, instead of beating it out into a firmament until it hides the sun, moon, and stars, ay, and the very face of God Himself"; above all, men of such clear and sensitive conscience as can never blur the simple and eternal distinctions between right and wrong.

We need men of vision in politics; and, thank God, we are getting some there. There is no higher or holier calling to which a young man of noble ideals, keen discernment, trained mind, and sensitive conscience can give himself to-day than politics. I will not even except the ministry. The ancient Greeks called their rulers and legislators "shepherds of the people"; alas, that too many such are to-day, in Milton's pregnant phrase, "blind mouths," mere hands to grasp and maws to swallow. And so "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed, but swollen with dew and the rank mist they draw"; and the multitude follow after blind guides that can lead them only to folly and destruction. We need to-day, as never before, politicians with a sense of statecraft, men of far and wide vision, with broad and sure grasp upon the history of human experience; men of penetration who can see alike through the pretence of the cheap commercial patriotism of the market-place and the speciousness

of quack remedies for existing evils; men who can see the end from the beginning, the inevitable out come of every course and policy; above all, men of incorruptible honesty and sensitive honor.

"God give us men; times like these demand
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands
Men whom the lust of office does not kill,
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,
Men who possess opinions and a will,
Men who have honor, men who will not lie,
Men who can stand before the demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking,
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the mists
In public duty and in private thinking.
For while the rabble with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo, freedom weeps,
Wrong rules the land and waiting justice sleeps."

We need men of vision also in our educational world. There has been great progress of a certain sort in the art of education of recent years. The methods and machinery of knowledge have been vastly bettered. The technique has been wonderfully improved. But it is a question whether the human product has been correspondingly bettered and improved; whether the educated man of to-day is any stronger-minded, clearer-headed, farther-visioned, higher-souled, than his forebears who were trained under the older and more defective methods of attaining mere knowledge; whether he has more insight, foresight,—above all, more conscience. In

fact, I sometimes fear that we have been so absorbed in our technique, our machinery of knowledge, that in our devotion to things we have largely forgotten the man. We have, to a great degree, eliminated the human from our educational processes, as we have the humanities from our college courses. Our great universities are becoming mere technical training schools. They produce skilled craftsmen rather than cultured men. We are so cluttered with details that we have lost vision of principles, so absorbed in jellyfish and amœba that we have forgotten men. We cannot see the forest for the trees. We study sources with such diligence that we are absolutely sure of every minutest fact we set down in our histories, whether George Washington smoked a clay pipe or a brier-wood; but I doubt whether we know as much of the human heart as garrulous old Herodotus or gossipy old Pepys. Still less do we discern the lessons of human experience or the broad sweep of the tides of human events as did a Thucydides, a Tacitus, or a Gibbon. In our economic investigations we accumulate accurate statistics in great immeasurable heaps, like masses of stone, bricks, and timber. But we seem to have lost the architectonic ability to build them into any noble and coherent temple of political and economic science. We cannot discern the basal principles that underlie all human society. Send out a modern investigator to examine the Cathedral of Amiens, and he will bring you back an exhaustive report in which

you shall find a geometrical diagram of every stone in the building and a chemical analysis of the mortar and cement in which it is set, but he will not have seen the Cathedral at all; while Ruskin in his "Bible of Amiens" tells you nothing about the material, and yet sets before your soul's sight a glowing vision of its sublime architecture and its symbolic meaning.

Yes, we need men of vision for our educators, who shall see that in the realm of knowledge as well as in the realm of commerce *things* were meant for *men* and not *men* for *things;* that the really educated man is not simply the man who knows accurately but *who sees clearly and largely;* that the true end and purpose of the whole process is not simply to turn out efficient human machines, creatures with full heads and skilled hands, but *men* in the full sense of the word; men with seeing eyes, men of high souls, strong minds, keen consciences, tender hearts, and mighty wills; men who will see true ideals from afar and follow them patiently by sure paths to the end.

And, above all, we need men of vision in the Church to-day, both in the pulpit and the pew. Never, I am convinced, did the Christian Church face a more serious crisis than that she faces to-day. Never was she in greater danger. And that danger, it seems to me, is chiefly from within. Her worst foes are "they of her own household." Her mission and her future are jeopardized most seriously by her most blatant champions, the self-constituted

guardians of her faith and order on the one side, and the shallow sciolists of a new philosophy and science on the other. Both parties seem to have identified the essence of the Christian religion with certain transitory and ever changing forms of ecclesiastical machinery and theological dogma on the one hand, or with certain passing modes and fashions of philosophical thinking on the other. To these non-essentials the practical mind of to-day is supremely indifferent. And because religion has been so persistently and insistently identified by its advocates with one or the other of them, the common people, and often the thinking people, are drifting away from the Church. They are esteemed to be indifferent to religion largely because they are indifferent to this or that misrepresentation of religion put upon it by its professional advocates and official representatives. And meantime, while the champions are engaged in clamorously defending these insignificant outposts, the philosophical and practical materialism of the day is creeping into the citadel and taking away from the people their faith, their Gospel, their Christ, and their God. We are like foolish children around the hearthstone of our ancestral home. We cannot agree upon our scientific theories as to the origin and nature of the fire that burns there. Some insist upon an elemental or atomic theory received by tradition from our ancestors, "the faith once delivered to the saints." Others insist upon a modern

theory of wave-motions. And until we can agree absolutely on our theory of fire, we cannot allow each other to use the fire for warmth or light or cooking our meals; we cannot even sit together by our hearthstone in mutual harmony and brotherly love as members of the same family in our Father's house. We even drive some of our brethren out-of-doors into the cold and dark. And we also, saddest to say, shut out the multitudes who really long to come in and share our fireside with us.

If the Christian Church fails to pass this crisis successfully or safely, it will be for lack of leadership, for want of men like the children of Issachar of old, "who had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do," — in a word, for want of men of vision.

We need such men in the ministry to-day, ah, how we need them; men of discrimination and discernment who can penetrate beneath the superficial accidents of our religion and see clearly its essence, its heart and soul; men who realize that religion, particularly Christianity, is not essentially a philosophy, a theology, a dogma, a creed, nor yet a cult, an institution, a system of ritual worship or Church government or philanthropic work, but that it is primarily a profound and persistent inward experience, the great experience of the saints in all the ages, the life of God in the soul of man, the fellowship of the human spirit with the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus; an experience which issues always in two

essential outward manifestations or expressions, personal character and human service. This essential process of experience throws off by-products of creed and dogma, theology and philosophy, varying with the times and peoples to whom it would interpret itself, speaking always to "each in his own tongue wherein he was born." It works through ever changing machinery. It clothes itself in cults and institutions, forms of worship and forms of administration, adopting the garb of each age and generation to which it ministers. But it remains in soul and essence ever the same; this is really "the faith once for all delivered to the saints"; namely, the communion of the soul with God in Christ Jesus, uttering itself outwardly in character and service.

When we have in our ministry enough men of sufficient vision to see this clearly, and courage to preach it boldly and yet lovingly, we shall have such a revival of religion as the world has never seen. For while the multitudes may be indifferent to our false accents and mistranslations of religion, they are often heart-hungry, yea, starving for the essential Gospel of Jesus Christ.

These are some of the calls for men of vision which resound in our ears on every side to-day. The need for them pleads in every walk of life, high and low; the world wants prophets and seers, men and women having, in St. Paul's splendid and pregnant phrase, "the eyes of their understanding enlightened"; who in this murk of materialism

behold ever clearly the heavenly vision of the Christian ideal, and are not disobedient unto it; men and women of spiritual penetration who get at the heart of eternal realities beneath the surface of specious appearances; above all, men and women of sensitive conscience and keen discrimination, who never blink or blur the subtlest shades of right and wrong, and who have the courage to stand by their convictions "though an host be set against them." For such moral and spiritual leaders the world waits to-day. And there are two institutions to which we look naturally for the training and inspiration of such leaders; those two are the Church and the School. God grant that in this critical time of need they may fulfil their Divine mission and raise up, particularly among our young men and women, in every vocation of life, a new generation of seers and prophets. "For where there is no vision, the people perish."

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIANITY AND THE WORLD

St. Matt. viii. 2–3. "And behold, there came a leper and worshipped Him, saying, 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.' And Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, saying, 'I will; be thou clean.'"

It was a new thing and a bold thing that Jesus did when He put forth His hand and touched this leper. It was contrary to all custom and precedent; it was against all law.

Leprosy was and is an intensely infectious and contagious disease. The Jewish law guarded against this contagion and infection with a thoroughness which puts to shame all the rules of modern medical science. Chapter after chapter of Leviticus is filled with the most minute directions as to the diagnosis of the disease and regulations for its treatment. But this treatment was never therapeutic in its aim; it never sought to cure; for the disease was regarded as almost hopelessly incurable. The treatment had no immediate bearing, therefore, on the sufferer. It simply protected the community. It guarded the healthy from danger. The one principle that ran through it all was separation, isolation. The moment the first faint signs of the dread disease were detected, the patient, were he high or low, rich

or poor, was ruthlessly torn from the bosom of his family and the sweet shelter and solace of his home; he was promptly exiled from all society, driven out of the streets of his native place into the solitudes of the desert, there to herd with miserable wretches in like affliction. You might see them, here and there, flitting like ghosts among the waste places, standing at a distance from the travelled roads, covering their faces with their mantles, and crying "unclean, unclean," at once in warning against any nearer approach and also in piteous appeal to the charity of the passer-by. All association with them was absolutely forbidden, under the most terrible penalties. To touch them meant, first, to share their fate of exile, loneliness, and misery, and eventually, probably, their horrible disease.

It was such rules of separation and isolation which in all His ministry Jesus fearlessly overrode. He went without hesitation wherever the voice of misery or need called Him. Moreover, while in many another case of disease He healed at a distance by His word of power, in the case of this leper He purposely went to him and laid His hand upon him. And at that touch, disease came not in upon the Christ, but from Him the fulness of cleansing life poured forth upon the leper. It seemed as if there was no suction, no inward currents about that Christ-life which could carry contagion, either physical or moral, into it; no negativeness even to give it a foothold. It was so tremendously positive,

that Christ-life; it was the fountain-life, the fulness of whose outgoing currents not only kept afar the evil, but poured forth its abundance of cleansing and healing. Therefore it was that Christ, sweeping aside all Jewish laws of separation and isolation, sought calmly and fearlessly a direct contact with the leper. For that contact never meant to Him the receiving of contagion, but it meant the giving of life.

Which things are not only history but allegory; not only are they fact but parable. For therein lies the deep distinction between the ancient Jewish religion and the Christianity of Christ. Judaism was essentially negative. It was a religion of isolation and separation. Its highest word was "holiness." And if you will trace that word to its root, you will find that it signifies, essentially, separation, isolation. The holy thing, the holy man, was the thing or the man that was set apart from other things and men; kept clean and pure by a kind of spiritual asepsis. Its chosen motto was this: "Come ye out and be ye separate, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord. Touch not the unclean thing." Its ideal was a chosen and elect nation, built about with high, unscalable and impenetrable walls of division from all other nations. Intermarriage and all other intermingling were forbidden under the strictest of penalties. The Jew had no dealings with the Samaritan. He might not even eat with a Gentile. He dared not teach his child a foreign tongue.

And all this in order that the nation might in this rigid seclusion develop its peculiar ideal of holiness. Moreover, at the heart of this isolated nation there grew up a class or caste which carried this distinctive idea of religion to its extreme logical conclusion. Their name of Pharisee means the "separated," those that are isolated and set apart from their kind. They held scrupulously aloof not only from the Gentile, but from the ignorant and depraved and careless among their own people. The Pharisee drew aside his robe as he walked the street, lest he should be defiled by the touch of one of the "amhaarets," the "groundlings." He avoided all the common contacts of life that he might perfect the holiness which is of the law. The Jewish type of a saint found its perfect expression in John the Baptist, the ascetic, the hermit, the anchorite; the man who lived alone in the solitudes of the desert, "far from the madding crowd" and the defiling associations of the world; who came into the world of men only now and then like a foreigner, a visitant from some distant and unearthly sphere; the man who has kept a saint, who preserved his holiness only by declaring spiritual quarantine against the world.

Now compare with that Christ and His Christianity, — the Christ who shunned no contacts with an evil world, who ever flung Himself into the very heart of human society and mingled without restraint in all its associations, who began His ministry at a wedding feast and was to be found at the dinner party, the

reception, now at the Pharisee's house, now at the wealthy publican's, the business man's, and now under the humble and lowly roof of the Galilean fisherman; ay, Christ, the friend of Publicans and sinners, even the harlots, that is, the friend of the worldling, the outcast, the reprobate, the branded and doomed of society; and yet through all that mingling, contracting no stain upon His sinless holiness, but breathing upon sin and evil everywhere the breath of a gentle and yet a fiery cleansing; imparting by His very touch the abundance of His own pure and purifying life, baptizing everything He touched "with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Is it not the story of the leper over again? And that was His ideal and His prayer for His disciples. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world," — not separation, isolation, — "but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." In the world and yet not of the world, — that they might redeem the world.

And the highest, the most characteristic word of Christ's Christianity is not that old Jewish word "holiness," which, though it has its place in the Gospel, never appears in the mere Jewish sense. But the highest, the most characteristic, word of the Gospel is the word "love." And love is never a negative word, but always a most tremendously positive word. It is essentially a communicative word. It involves in its very nature the giving out, the mission, the emission, and the transmission of what-

ever it has to give or send,—light, knowledge, truth, blessing, life. It is a fountain word. It keeps the evil, the sin of the world, away from the man or the Church, never by the merely negative methods of spiritual or moral asepsis, or quarantine, but always by the strong and positive outflow of the abundance of life, pure and purifying life. It overcomes evil with good.

Now we can see, I am sure, why Christianity is essentially a missionary religion, and the Gospel by its very nature a missionary Gospel. Missions are not a peculiar side-issue in the work of the Church and the message of the Gospel, a kind of addendum or postscript to a Christianity whose chief business is something else; they are not something which you take up or let alone without affecting your real Christianity, a kind of work of supererogation. But the missionary idea is the very heart and essence of Christ's Christianity. Lose that missionary idea, that idea of transmission, of imparting and giving out your religion at every possible contact with the world, near or far, and you may have something quite respectable and useful left, a neat Jewish Pharisaic plan for the saving of your own mean little soul by isolating it from the great needy, sinning world, by hermetically sealing it up like an Egyptian mummy or any other dead thing from the evil of that world: but you have not Christ's Christianity; you have lost the very heart and soul and life out of it, all that made it really alive, vital, all that made it

positive and so efficient either to save the world or your own soul; that is, all that really made it Christian. For this strange paradox is true, — you can keep your Christianity only by giving it away. The spring on the hillside can continue to be a spring — the clear, singing fountain of refreshment — only as it gives its waters away freely to the thirsty land below. The moment it ceases to do that, the moment it dams up its waters and becomes self-contained, that moment it ceases to be a spring. It becomes a swamp, a stagnant morass, from which you can get only malaria and mosquitoes. Your window is a window only so long as it transmits freely to the darkened room beyond the glory of the sunlight that smites it from without. The moment it ceases to do that, the moment it begins to absorb or reflect the light, that moment it practically ceases to be glass, the translucent and transparent thing it was meant to be, and becomes as dead and opaque as a sheet of lead.

So the Christian man or Christian Church that ceases to transmit the grace and truth of the Gospel, "the light of the glory of God that hath shined in our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ," — that is, the man or Church that is not missionary in character, — that man or Church practically ceases to be Christian. They lapse back into the ancient Judaism of Ezra's time or the time of the Pharisees of the Gospel. It is a case of reversion to type. There has been a good deal of this Judaism in the Christian Church,

this religion of holiness rather than of love; the religion that is content to save itself by separation and isolation from a wicked world, but will not try, does not care to try, to save the world. Think of the Church of the eighteenth century before the great movement of modern missions began. Could a deader thing be imagined? A few selfish saints, content with their own respectability and assurance of salvation, in the midst of a corrupt and decaying society; a little, selfish Church whose main business was to furnish these few selfish saints with their means of grace, their spiritual privileges and luxuries, and was perfectly satisfied to do that and let all the world else be lost. It took for its motto those words of St. John, "We are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness," but it gave to them a Jewish rather than a Christian interpretation and conclusion. It said not as the Apostles of old, "Therefore let us go and carry the light of Christ into its darkness, the love of Christ into its hatred, the cleansing of Christ into its sin, the life of Christ into its deadness"; nay, not that, but it said with the Jews of old, "Therefore let us draw sharp the lines of demarcation between us and the wicked world, let us build high the walls of separation and isolation, lest we be defiled and infected by contact with it." And so the saints had no dealings with the sinners, nor the Christians with the heathen. The Church devoted herself to herself. She wrapped about her the garments of her exclusiveness like the cerements

of the dead, and was fast shrivelling into an ancient and venerable mummy.

And then there came a strange stirring of life in the midst of the dry bones. It was the great movement of modern missions coming to its birth. John Wesley took for his motto "the world is my parish," and went out with his devoted followers into the fields, the highways, and hedges to touch the unreached masses with the mighty power of Christ. And out of that movement sprang the whole of the pioneer and frontier work of the Christian Church; ay, out of it came eventually the suggestion and the inspiration of all that vast work which we call domestic or home missions. Robert Raikes went out into the streets and the alleys of Gloucester and gathered the waifs and the strays, the neglected little ones, into the arms of Christ, and so laid the foundation not only of the modern Sunday School, but also of all the slum work, so-called, — particularly the work for neglected children, such as the free kindergarten, the day-nursery, etc., — which so largely absorb the energies of the modern city parish as well as those of outside organizations. And then, lastly, after the noble example and under the inspiration of the Moravian Brethren, the missionary church *par excellence*, bold and consecrated spirits here and there like Henry Martyn and David Carey, the shoemaker, ventured out into the far heathen world, walled in as it was against foreign intrusions and bristling with hostility, to lay

Christ's hands of healing and life upon its hideous leprosies. And so began the foreign missionary movement of modern days. Those early pioneers had to go out alone, without the support of the Church at home to sustain them or its sympathy to inspire them. They had to go in the teeth of established prejudices. They were even formally denounced by grave ecclesiastical assemblies as interfering with the Divine decrees on behalf of the elect. If God wanted the heathen abroad and the unreached at home, He would save them in His own way without their feeble and presumptuous help. But these men never hesitated. They went because they knew that Christ had sent them, ay, because Christ had led the way, and they must follow Him. And out of those feeble beginnings grew the world-wide work of modern missions.

And now, as we have entered upon this new twentieth century, the Lord God Almighty hath lifted before our eyes a new banner and uttered in our ears a new watchword. A command has gone forth for an advance all along the line in this primary work of the Christian Church. For God has visibly taken things into His own hands lately. It has come to pass in His Providence that the work of missions, even foreign missions, is no longer, and can no longer, be regarded by any rational man as resting on a theory which a Christian may believe in or not as he chooses; it is no longer to be considered as only a voluntary work which a few brave and daring

spirits may take up and the rest of us with impunity let be. God has laid it upon the whole Church as a work of absolute necessity. It has become the article of a standing or a falling Church, of a standing or a falling Christian civilization. No choice is left us but to obey the command or prove recreant and suffer the consequences for ourselves and our children. For to use historic words it is "a condition and not a theory that confronts us." In these days of ours, God is marvellously and irresistibly compacting the human family into a solidarity and a unity never before known. All the old lines of demarcation, all the old walls of separation whereby race kept itself aloof from race, class from class, and man from man, are being obliterated, and the whole world is becoming one, as never before. We can no longer stand independent in proud and selfish isolation, man from man, class from class, nation from nation. Nay, we must stand or fall together. We must share our blessings or else our curses. One fate involves us all. For God is enforcing that unity, that solidarity, under terrible sanctions in these days of ours.

Let me illustrate and make plain what I mean. In the more primitive conditions of society when each man, or at least each class and group of men, more nearly supplied its own wants, there was possible a quasi-independence and isolation. But now, with the marvellous divisions of labor and complicated relationships of modern industrial and social

development, anything approaching isolation is utterly impossible. We are each of us woven by innumerable and intricate threads into the solid warp and woof of the common life. And we must share together. For example, in former days if a plague should break out in a wandering tribe of Bedouin Arabs or North American Indians, or in an early white settlement on our American frontier, it was perfectly possible to protect every other tribe or settlement from it; for each group was sufficient of itself; each supplied its own simple wants; and there need be little or no communication. But if the slums and tenement-houses of our great cities be, as reports of investigating committees say they are, the fertile breeding grounds of typhus fever and tuberculosis and other contagious diseases, then the avenues cannot rest secure in their sanitary conditions and healthful surroundings and declare quarantine against the slums. No effective quarantine can be established. You cannot avoid contact between classes. There are thousands of unsuspected channels of communication which cannot be guarded. For example, you buy a fashionable garment in an up-town store. What is the history of that garment? Follow it and you will find perhaps that its seams have been stitched by the weary overworked hands of a coughing consumptive in a filthy, crowded tenement room. It carries in it the seeds and germs of disease. And your fairest and best-beloved is laid low in spite of all that wealth

and science can do. What does it mean? It means this, among other things, that the old Jewish method of protection by separation and isolation is utterly impossible amidst the complications of our highly organized modern society. Contact is inevitable along a thousand unsuspected lines. The only method of dealing with the problem is the Christ method, the method of missions. We who are strong and full of wholesome life must go and lay our hands of cleansing and healing upon these lepers of our modern society, or else we must be involved in their fate. The wealthy, the masters and leaders of the industrial, political, and social world, must see to it that there are sanitary abodes for the poor, healthful conditions for the lives of the workers; that slums are abolished and living wages paid, equity and justice established, and wholesome life made possible for the toilers. Otherwise, if we will not share our blessings, if we attempt to hoard them in selfish indulgences, then we shall be crushed under a common fate. It is so in all other realms besides the physical. In a democracy you cannot let ignorance breed unchecked in the slums and keep your politics pure and clean. Though you rent the highest-priced pew in the most fashionable church and patronize the most approved private schools, you cannot let moral miasma reek in the Tenderloin, and keep your children pure. Ah, God is enforcing the solidarity of human society in these days under the most awful of sanctions!

So it is also with the world at large. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the world was still largely a divided world, and the human race broken up into isolated fragments. China, Japan, Africa, — nearly all the great heathen countries, — were barred and locked and hermetically sealed against Christendom. The plagues and the leprosies of heathenism might fester there, and we be reasonably safe. Nothing but a Christ-like love and pity could send the lonely missionary out to do his work in that dark and dying heathen world. We were safe whether he went or not. But now all is different. Every bar is down, every gate flung open. The Empire of England girdles the world. She has opened Africa, India, China, and the islands of the sea to the trade and intercourse of the world. The shuttles of commerce, the great ships of the deep, fly back and forth in bewildering intricacy and weave us fast to each other in the closest web of interrelationship. Telegraph lines by land and cables under sea stretch like great nerves from country to country. Touch it anywhere and the whole world responds to the touch. A flurry in stocks cannot take place in Japan without Wall Street feeling it. The bubonic plague cannot break out in India without New York being instantly quarantined against it. There is no remote land. The mail goes to almost every island of the seas, and what were savage wilds a few years ago now have their daily newspapers. England is building a railway throughout the length of the African conti-

nent. Germany is about to build one through Asia Minor into the heart of Persia. And Americans are developing a vast system which will eventually cover China. The only remote and inaccessible spot left on the face of the globe, the only spot untouched and as yet untouchable by our so-called Christian civilization, is the upland of Thibet.

This is an age of expansion. A great forward movement has set in simultaneously among all the nominally Christian nations of the world, and they are taking possession of heathendom. And whether we like it or no, whether we approve the movement or no, our own nation, hitherto isolated by policy as well as by seas from all the rest of the world, has joined in that movement of expansion. Some say she has been forced into it by the irresistible logic of events, which is but another name for the Providence of God. Whether so or not, the fact remains that our soldiers are in distant and partly heathen lands; our merchants and traders, our politicians and administrators, are there, and are going there, in ever increasing numbers. There is a significant change in the character of immigrants that every year pour into our lands in such great tides. They used to come mostly from the nominally Christian peoples of Europe. Now they are coming more and more from the heathen nations of Asia; and Africa stands yet in reserve.

What does all this strange, unprecedented history of our times mean? It means this, for one thing, that

the days of isolation are gone, and gone forever. Nation can no longer hold itself aloof from nation, and people from people, as if they did not share a common humanity, hardly as if they lived in the same world. We are daily being forced into closer contacts, welded into closer unities. What is to be the consequence of all this? Without the touch, the healing, cleansing, life-giving touch of Christ and His Gospel, without the higher life of a genuinely Christian civilization, it may mean a disaster fearful to contemplate, whose proportions we can scarcely imagine. On the one side, it can mean only destruction to the races of heathendom. It is a well-known law of ethnology that unless there be some assimilating, unifying power such as the Gospel alone can furnish, the weaker always perishes rapidly before the stronger. The contacts of trade, commercialism, and militarism bring invariably in their train contagion and infection. The heathen are apt pupils of evil. With a fatal facility they learn the new vices of the soldiers, sailors, and traders of so-called civilized and Christian peoples, and add them to their own native vices and diseases. And the combination means nothing less than destruction. We have some fearful examples of that law before our eyes to-day,—the opium trade forced upon China by the commercial greed of Christian England against the remonstrances of even its torpid heathen conscience, American saloons and dives springing up like mushrooms in the streets of Manila,

and the Christian soldiers of Europe (God save the mark) instructing the heathen Chinese in the arts of cruelty and lust and bloody revenge. But all this is not without its fearful Nemesis. There are consequences that run in the other direction, also. With these ever closer relations of commerce and conquest which are fast knitting all the world into one, come new and fearful dangers to ourselves. Up from the uncleansed life of heathendom shall sweep mighty plagues, both physical and moral. That life has diseases to give us, whose horror we never dreamed of. It has sins to teach us which even in the depths of our depravity we have not imagined. And soldiers and sailors, traders and merchants, wanderers in far lands, away from the restraints of home, acquaintance, and familiar associations, are apt pupils in such things.

That is what contact without Christ is bound to mean. If through that inevitable touch of people upon people virtue does not go out from us to them, then contagion and infection are sure to pass from them to us and us to them. If we will not share with them our highest life, our nobler ambitions, our blessings, above all, our Gospel, then they will share with us their plagues of soul and body. Therefore alongside the warehouse, the barracks, and the saloon, which always mark the first wave of an advancing Western civilization, must be built the Christian school, the hospital, and the church.

This is what I meant when I said that at the

dawn of this twentieth century the work and the cause of Christian missions had become the article of a standing Church, and of a standing Christian civilization. This, too, is what I meant when I said that God had taken matters visibly into His own hands and laid this great cause upon us, no longer as a theory to be accepted or rejected at pleasure, but as a condition that must be faced; no longer as a mere call for volunteers, but as the bounden and inevitable duty of all,—a universal draft into the army of the Lord. We can no longer be indifferent; we can no longer draw limitations about our responsibilities. For God has swept away all boundaries and made the whole world one.

God help this Christian Church in these early years of the new century to take due heed to the banner that is lifted before her eyes and the call that sounds in her ears. It is the banner and the call of a great new forward movement all along the line. Inscribed upon that banner, proclaimed in trumpet tones in that call, are these words, "The world for Christ and Christ for the world."

Only let us not meet this great crisis of need and opportunity in the spirit of fear and trembling, oppressed by our responsibilities, under dread of disaster to ourselves if we do not obey the command, though that disaster be as imminent and certain as I have pictured it. Our best work can never be done in that spirit. But rather let us rise

and obey because "the light of the glory of God hath shined in our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ," and we must send that light into whatever darkness lies beyond; because the joy of Christ sings in our souls, and we must share it with all the sorrowing world; because the life of Christ throbs in our pulse, and we must impart it to all that is morally weak and spiritually moribund. In that spirit may the Church of Jesus Christ go, as He went, wherever a need calls her to lay her hands of life and healing upon all the diseases, the ignorance, the vice, the sins, and the sorrows of the whole human race.

CHAPTER III

DIVES AND LAZARUS

St. Luke xvi. 19–31.

THE story of Dives and Lazarus is one of the most graphic and dramatic pieces in all parabolic literature. It bites into the mind and lodges itself in the memory of the average hearer or reader. No parable is better known. And yet, I am convinced, no parable is less understood. No parable is more frequently and thoroughly misinterpreted and misapplied. It is commonly thought to deal with eschatology; that is, it is supposed to give us information about the details of life after death, the states and conditions of the inhabitants of heaven and hell, or at least of paradise and purgatory. Such is very commonly understood to be its purpose, and on that supposition many a sermon has been preached, proving from its teaching the literalness and materiality of hell-fire and its torments, the unchangeable fixity of character and state in the eternal world, the everlastingness of punishment on the one hand and of celestial bliss on the other, even the possibility of intercourse between the damned and the saved, and the availability of prayers not only *for* the departed but *to* the departed saints

(though it is hard to see what encouragement for asking anything of a departed saint could be gathered from poor Dives' unavailing petitions to Father Abraham).

Now I submit that such a use of this parable is entirely mistaken and beside the mark. Its eschatology — that is, its teaching about the other world — is purely incidental. No certain inference can be drawn from it as to the details of that other life, for our Lord never gratifies our curiosity as to such matters. The picture of the other life is ever drawn large; only a rough etching, never a minute steel engraving, is given us. And the reason is plain; He would withdraw our attention from idle speculation upon the unpractical details of the future life, and fasten it upon the very practical concerns of this present life. He is always saying to us with a hand over our eyes, "One life at a time." He reveals the future, but in the largest, barest outline, and that only in so far as it bears directly and powerfully on the present. This parable of Dives and Lazarus is no exception to that rule. As I have said, its eschatology is purely incidental; but its sociology is essential. It has an intensely practical and tremendously important lesson to teach us about the duties and relations of men in this present world. That is the whole aim and end of the parable. But in order to drive home that lesson, in order to present it most dramatically, in order to show the inevitable outcome and issue of certain

courses of action here, the scene is carried over into the other world.

But that other life is presented in the only garb in which it would be intelligible to a Jew of that day; namely, in the popular garb in which the Jewish imagination had been accustomed to array it. Had Christ been talking to North American Indians, He would undoubtedly have spoken of the Great Spirit and the Happy Hunting Grounds. He was talking to Jews, and therefore He spoke of Abraham's bosom and the fires of Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom. To draw from such stage properties an eschatology, a systematic exposition of the details of the other world, and to obliterate therewith the main teaching of the parable about practical life here, is like making out of the tragedy of "Hamlet" a treatise on spooks, because it contains a ghost, and missing the tremendous ethical and spiritual import of that great drama. What, then, is the main point of this parable of Dives and Lazarus?

Some one has remarked that the essence of an ethical system is to be discerned as much in what it hates and condemns as in what it approves and commends. Now the ethical teaching of Jesus centres in just one thing—love, love to God as realized in love to fellow-man. That is the meaning of the two great commandments in which Christ sums up all the law and the prophets, or the whole duty of man. Naturally the most heinous offences in such

a system would be the offences against the spirit of love. Consequently two unpardonable sins are set forth in the teaching of Jesus; one is implacability as portrayed in the unforgiving servant; the other inhumanity as pictured in this story of Dives and Lazarus. Mark you, both sins are what might be called negative sins rather than positive sins. In Christ's judgment, men are far oftener condemned for what they do not do, what they fail to do, than for what they do. It is the unprofitable servant, not the positively offending servant, who is cast into the outer darkness. Those who see in this story only the philosophy of retribution and reward, of future recompenses and punishments, are hard put to it to find any very positive sin for which Dives should be so terribly punished, or any very positive virtue for which Lazarus is so rewarded; unless, indeed, it be a positive sin to be rich and a positive virtue to be poor.

Let us read the story with this thought in mind. "There was a certain rich man," — his name is not given, because he is simply the chosen type of a class. You will look in your concordances in vain for the name Dives. That is simply the Latin word for "rich man" which has been popularly used to designate the chief figure of the story. Now this same Dives appears to have been an inoffensive kind of gentleman. We do not read of anything very bad that he ever did. To be sure, "he was arrayed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously

every day." He wore the best clothes that were to be had. In his kitchen he had the best cook that could be obtained. He set the best table in town; he gave the best dinners and entertainments. But there is no condemnation passed upon all this, for there was nothing wrong in it. We do not read that he was led by these things into any of those positive sins which so often go along with luxury and "fulness of bread," the sins of the flesh. Dives is not pictured as a drunkard, a libertine, or a profligate. He is simply an ordinary man of the world, probably decent and correct enough so far as the ordinary negative moralities and conventionalities of society, and even of the Church, are concerned. For that matter he may have been a leader in society and the Church. He would undoubtedly have been a member of the Chamber of Commerce in a modern city. He could have been a member of the vestry or even senior warden of a fashionable parish, or, as they called it in that day, a ruler of the synagogue. None of these things are mentioned, because none of these things are thought significant enough to be mentioned. The point is simply this: all the ordinary conventional standards and criteria by which we commonly make up our estimates of men in the world and society are swept aside, and our attention is all focussed on one burning point, upon one radical and fatal defect in life and character which condemned the man beyond hope or appeal at Christ's bar of judgment.

To find out what that defect was, we must look at the other figure in the story, Lazarus. Now although Lazarus is dignified with a name, it is not because in the story he has any particularly pronounced characteristics, any marked individuality or personality. Indeed, commentators have been hard put to it to find any positive virtue in Lazarus which should call for any particular consideration here, or reward hereafter. And as far as the man's life or character is concerned, they have been obliged to give the task up as a bad job, for he does and says absolutely nothing throughout the whole course of the story, either in this world or the next. As a last resort, the commentators have betaken themselves to the etymology of his name, and have said he must somehow have been pious, because he is called Lazarus, "God is my helper." But evidently this is a desperate expedient, for all you can get out of the name is merely negative. It means "here is a poor fellow who is utterly man-forsaken. He has no human friend or helper whatsoever. He can look no-whither save to God alone for sympathy or care, therefore 'God help him.'"

No, Lazarus is only a lay-figure in the story; he serves simply as a foil to bring out into bold relief the fatal defect in Dives' otherwise negatively correct character. That seems to be his sole purpose in the drama, whether we look at the scene in this world or the other. Lazarus is simply a type of human misery and wretchedness, the sum of human

want and woe concentrated in one individual. The picture is most pathetically presented; the poor, leprous, ulcer-devoured beggar, flung down heartlessly at the rich man's door by his companions (hardened as they were by use and wont to the sight of such misery), hungry for the very crumbs from the rich man's table, so abjectly helpless and defenceless that even the dogs approach him as fearlessly as they would a dead body, and treat him as they would a piece of carrion. The one message he seems to din into our ears is this: "I was laid at this man's gate. He knew me; he could not pass in or out of his house without seeing me; yet as a leprous beggar I have lived and as a leprous beggar I will die, without one touch of human sympathy or care bestowed upon me." He is simply a type of the opportunity for the exercise of humanity, and that opportunity of the most obtrusive sort, which is thrust daily by Providence upon Dives' attention, and as continually ignored and neglected by him. Here, then, is the point of the whole parable. Ability the most abundant and need the most pitiful are met together; and the ability refuses to minister to the need. Dives' sin is the negative sin of inhumanity. Misery is at his door daily. The means of service are in his hand. But he is careless, thoughtless, because he is self-absorbed. He is wilfully ignorant. He shuts his eyes to the opportunities of service that thrust themselves obtrusively upon his vision. He shuts his ears to the calls for sym-

pathy that wail up to him from his very door-step. He will not see nor hear, because the sight and the sound are unpleasant. They would mar the merriment of his feast of life. For to him life itself is but one long feast, and he will not have it spoiled. Provided his amusements amuse him and his pleasures please him, he cares not how the rest of the world may go. Provided he be "clothed in purple and fine linen and fare sumptuously" ("merrily," the word means) "every day," he cares not how many naked and leprous beggars may lie just outside his gates. He knows not the miseries of the world that lie within the reach of his right hand, because that knowledge would be disturbing to his ease and peace of mind. He is one of those wilfully blind optimists who cry, "All the world must be warm because my front door is shut." That is Dives' one sin, the negative sin of a careless, thoughtless, wilfully blind inhumanity.

And then comes the end. In each case it is congruous with the life. The rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and "fared sumptuously every day" is buried with pomp and ceremony. He has a stately funeral. We can fairly hear the panegyric that is pronounced over this prominent citizen by the Rev. Dr. Gamaliel or Hillel. He is probably buried in a tomb almost as sumptuous as the house he lived in.

The poor beggar dies also, but nothing is said about his funeral. Probably he had none. Perhaps

his body is flung into some ditch by the wayside to be devoured by the dogs that once licked his sores. And then the scene shifts suddenly to the other world. And lo, everything, every relation and circumstance, are exactly reversed. Dives finds awaiting him the doom which the Jewish imagination pictured as belonging to the condemned. His lot is amidst the fires of Gehenna. Lazarus obtains the bliss which was the goal of every true Israelite's hope. He rests in Abraham's bosom. Dives now presents the opportunity for sympathy and service. Lazarus is as Dives was on earth. And lo, suddenly he who was so blind to the sights of misery that thrust themselves obtrusively upon him in his earthly life, so deaf to the cries for pity that sounded in his ears daily, this same Dives is shamelessly ready to put up his plea for mercy, when suffering touches him, to the one he had scorned and ignored in the world of men. Yet not quite *to* him. Here is a fine touch of the rich man's natural arrogance. He does not deign to ask Lazarus himself directly; that would be humiliation too deep, to sue to the beggar that once lay neglected at his gate. But he asks Abraham to use Lazarus as a servant, a tool, an instrument for his relief. He makes no doubt of Lazarus' willingness for the mission. Perhaps he thinks that Lazarus ought to be proud of the chance of being of service to such as he. At any rate, Lazarus is hardly worth being personally considered in the matter. For the poor in the view of too

many Dives are not *persons* to be considered, but only *hands* to serve us who have the power to make them serve. Therefore, he cries, "Father Abraham, send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." Ah, Dives, I fear that not even the fires of Gehenna have yet purged out thine arrogance and inhumanity!

And the answer comes promptly. It is considerate, kindly, yet firm, firm almost to sternness. It seems to say, "Not so fast, my hasty friend. The way out of your misery cannot be so swift nor easy, lest it fail of its Divine purpose and meaning. First you must learn that that law of justice, of equity, which you were so well content to ignore amidst the favorable inequalities of that former life must be balanced and evened up by the new and unfavorable inequalities of this life: "Son, remember that thou receivedst thy good things in thy lifetime, and Lazarus in like manner evil things. But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." That process of equalization must go on to its due end and issue. And then there is added a hint of a strange impossibility, some impenetrable barrier to that ministry of service which exists in this new world. "Besides all this, between us and you a great gulf is fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." What the impassable chasm is, we are not told, and we cannot tell. It may

be in the very nature of things, and so unchangeable and eternal. But it may be in the nature of Dives, and so there may yet be hope. It may be Dives' spiritual incapacity that still prevents the ministry of mercy and forgiveness. For in the eternal world, where we finally get at realities, only "the merciful can obtain mercy as only the forgiving can be forgiven." And no brief bath in purgatorial fires can burn out that man's inhumanity who has long hardened himself, through a lifetime of careless, thoughtless indifference, against human kindliness and sympathy. Nay, no external force can ever deepen or mellow such a nature. The new heart must be formed from within; the new spirit of brotherly love must grow up from within. And that takes time, patience, much thought, and generally much suffering to accomplish. Until that has been accomplished, the unmerciful cannot with safety to his own best good receive mercy. And so Dives must still bide his time. His arrogance and inhumanity are not yet purged away. One more plea he makes. And it looks at first sight as if it might mean the first dawn of a new spirit of considerateness and care for others. But if we look more closely, it does not yet breathe the right spirit. Dives would make use of Lazarus once more, without question of his will in the matter. Dives somehow cannot adjust himself to the reversed conditions and positions of this strange new world. "I pray thee, Father Abraham, that thou wouldest send him to

my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, that they come not into this place of torment." Yes, his first thought, after he sees that personal relief is not possible, is not, as it should be, for the man whom he has all his life wronged and neglected, but at most for his own brethren, his own kind and kin; it is not a broad, pure, disinterested human love, but a mere selfish love for his own flesh. Perhaps it gives promise of something better. It is an indication of a little geniality and unselfishness. But after all it is at best but an extended and projected self-love, the love of kin and kind. And there lurks in it a suggestion of self-excuse. "If I had only been adequately, startlingly, forcibly, irresistibly, warned of this strange law of humanity, this terrible law of merely negative sin and its awful results, perhaps I would not have fallen into this fate. Therefore I am not without excuse." But the answer comes. "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." But Dives pleads, "Nay, Father Abraham, this light of common revelation as interpreted by the voice of conscience is not sufficient to teach this so strange and difficult lesson of humanity to my sort. It needs something more than that. It needs a miracle. If one went to them from the dead, with the awful light eternal shining through his eyes, then they would believe and heed." But the answer comes sadly yet firmly, — sadly because the hard heart is so slow to learn its lesson, — "If

they heed not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." "Poor foolish soul," the words seem to say, "thinkest thou that if the flames of Gehenna cannot teach thee this lesson, a messenger from the dead will teach it thy brethren? Nay, they would but explain him away with their philosophies as a spook, an apparition, an illusion of disordered fancy, laugh at him and go on in their heedless worldliness, fling themselves deeper into the vortex of their own selfishness, harden harder their obdurate hearts. For the spirit of humaneness, of human love and sympathy, — this can be forced on no one from without, even by a miracle: it must grow up sweetly and naturally from within. Therefore, if they heed not the voice of conscience as quickened by revelation, they will not heed though one went to them from the dead."

That is the lesson of the parable of Dives and Lazarus. I have been overlong in drawing it out, but my application shall be brief; for it lies on the surface of the text.

We commonly think that we must *do* something, and do something positive, something heinous and monstrous, in order to be condemned at the bar of Christ's judgment. But Christ teaches not so. He tells us that we must *do* something to be saved, do much and do strenuously. To be condemned, however, we need but to *do nothing*. It is the unprofitable servant that is cast into the outer dark-

ness. It is enough, like Dives, to have led a decent, correct, proper, and respectable life so far as negative and conventional moralities are concerned, but nevertheless a thoughtless, careless, and neglectful, and so inhuman, life. It is enough to have been so absorbed in our own legitimate and respectable pleasures and amusements that we have forgotten and ignored the calls of human service and sympathy that fairly obtrude themselves upon us on every side, enough that we have shut our eyes and stopped our ears to Lazarus, who lies at our gates.

And does not some Lazarus lie at every gate? Ah, the human misery and need that lie within the reach of every hand of ability and means, if we would but stretch it forth in wise sympathy and blessing. Did you ever go with your wash-woman to the hovel or the tenement room she calls her home, and there see the puny, sickly children for whom she toils? Did you ever follow the history of the coat on your back until it led you to some wretched sweater's den where pallid women and little children labor amid indescribable conditions through midnight hours for a wretched pittance that barely keeps body and soul together, — and sometimes does not even do that? Have you ever gone with the settlement worker or the Salvation Army soldier through the slums of your own city and actually seen the conditions of the people upon whom you and I subsist, that great mute substratum of our delightful society? These are the Lazarus at our doors.

Our whole social and industrial system is built upon them, as upon a living human foundation. They are the mud-sills of society. But we do not want even to think of them, much less to see or hear them. The very suggestion of them is unpleasant, for it disturbs our peace of mind and brings up vague, restless feelings of accountability for such a state of things. For the sight of Lazarus spoils the pleasure of our feast of life. And therefore we shut out that sight and sound, and cry, "On with the dance and on with the feast." Provided our pleasures still please and our amusements amuse, we care not how it fares with Lazarus at the gate. And so inhumanity is the commonest of sins. I mean not the positive inhumanity of oppression and cruelty, but the negative inhumanity of carelessness and thoughtlessness.

You remember that awful vision of William Dean Howells. He saw as in a dream a pleasant lawn-party, a *fête champêtre*. Society was there in its best, "clad in purple and fine linen," dancing upon a sward of peculiar livid green, dotted with daisies of a vivid red. He looked closer, and behold! — that livid greensward was compacted of human faces, men's and women's and little children's, pallid with hunger and suffering. And the red daisies, — they were spouts and gouts of blood where the sharp heels of the dancers struck the living flesh. But the music drowned the groans, and society went on with the dance.

Ah, my friends, in the day of Christ's judgment, it may not be said to you and to me, "Inasmuch as ye did this and that, inasmuch as ye broke this and that commandment of the great stone tables of the moral law." Nay, that may not be said unto us, for possibly it cannot be said. We have lived morally, decently, correctly, respectably. But it shall be sufficient for our condemnation, if the great, loving, sorrowful Christ must say unto us in that day, "Inasmuch as ye did it not, yea, inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these My brethren, the sick, the hungry, the imprisoned, the suffering, the despised, the outcasts, the Lazarus who lay at your gate, ye did it not unto Me. Therefore depart from Me."

CHAPTER IV

THE LEGAL CONSCIENCE

St. John xviii. 28. "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the Hall of Judgment; and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover."

It is a dramatic scene which the text presents to us. Let us see who are the actors. They are all members of the Sanhedrim, Jerusalem's most prominent citizens; men eminent in every walk of life, leaders of the business world, lawyers, statesmen, divines, — all are there. The assemblage reminds one of a combination of the Presbyterian General Assembly and the United States Senate, or the English House of Lords with the whole Bench of Bishops. And what is the occasion that calls such a remarkable gathering of prominent citizens together? What is the business which they have taken in hand? Why, they are intent upon committing the most diabolical and heinous crime of all human history, a crime at which the civilized world has shuddered ever since; they are plotting to secure the crucifixion of the Son of God. To be sure, you may say in excuse that they did not know that He was the Son of God, that they were too blinded by passion and prejudice and self-interest to see the vision that was set before

their eyes; if that be an excuse and not a condemnation. But they did know that He was an innocent man, whose only offence was a supreme and fearless loyalty to the truth and an absolute devotion to the service of humanity. But that fact in no wise hinders them. They do not shrink or hesitate or deliberate. They go boldly and calmly forward. Why? *Because that crime can be construed into terms of legality.* Did not the ancient law say, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live"? And had not this man bewitched the minds of the common people with His fanaticisms and strange hypnotic influence? Was not the blasphemer to be put to death? And had not this fellow cast contumely upon all the sacred traditions of orthodoxy and churchmanship? Was He not guilty of both heresy and sacrilege? Had He not even claimed to be the *Son of God?* Moreover, were not they the constituted guardians of the public order, — or the accepted disorder, — of society? And was not this man upsetting all the established system, inflaming the minds of the vulgar masses with discontent, beginning from Galilee even unto the Holy City itself? Therefore they pursue their monstrous purpose deliberately, calmly, without a qualm of conscience, yea, even with a virtuous sense of doing God service. For are they not defending the Divine Honor? *It is legal, it is legal,* this crime of theirs. Therefore it is right.

But on the threshold of Pilate's judgment-hall, they suddenly come to a halt. Why? Ah, because

they themselves have stumbled across a statute, a statute having a sanction, involving a penalty. And these men have great respect for penalties, if they have none for principles. For the accepted code of their Church, the established standard of churchmanship, declared that if any Jew entered into the house of any man of another tongue or nation, particularly of an alien faith, he became thereby ceremonially defiled, and therefore incapable of participating in the sacred rites and ordinances of religion. If, then, they went into Pilate's judgment-hall that morning, they would break their record of orthodoxy and churchmanship; they would ruin their reputation for piety among the people. And that reputation was dearer to them than all else besides, dearer than righteousness or truth, justice or mercy. Therefore they halt upon the threshold.

Here, then, are men infinitesimally scrupulous and yet absolutely unprincipled. What is the secret of this ethical monstrosity, this moral contradiction? It lies in what I should call *The Legal Conscience.*

Let me explain what I mean by the legal conscience.

There are certain great simple principles of honesty, honor, purity and integrity, justice and brotherly love. There are the everlasting foundations of human righteousness. According as you look at them from the Divine or the human side, they are the revelations and inspirations of Almighty God, or they are the discoveries of the purest moral

insight and instinct of humanity. The two amount to the same thing to me. There can be no human vision of right except there be first a Divine revelation of the ideal. And no Divine revelation would be of any use without the human vision that should perceive and understand it. Those principles find expression in such utterances as the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes or the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule or Christ's law of love to God and the neighbor. These make up the natural law of the Kingdom of God. These constitute the moral order of our social life without which it cannot flow smoothly or rightly, or even in the long run continue to exist; just as the laws of hygiene and sanitation constitute the order without which our physical life cannot flow rightly or harmoniously, or in the long run continue to exist.

But in order to apply those great fundamental principles of moral order to all the details and practical exigencies of life, men have from time to time made to themselves certain positive or arbitrary laws, statutes of the State or canons of the Church, and still more powerful than these, conventions, traditions, and customs of good form and good society. These are sometimes good, sometimes bad, sometimes indifferent. At best, they are but means to an end. The trouble is, men make these things a substitute for the end instead of a means thereto. The Church is very apt to make religiousness a substitute for righteousness instead of a means to righteousness.

And the business world is very apt to make legality a substitute for honesty and honor, justice and equity, instead of the instrument and servant thereof. And frequently the ordinary man is more concerned about the penalty of the statute than he is about the sanctions of the moral law of God. You may hold your wax taper so near the eye that it hides the sun in the heavens; so you may hold your canon or custom or statute so close to your conscience that it conceals the moral law of God. Out of this state of things arise two forms of the legalized conscience, — the ecclesiastical conscience and the commercial conscience.

Perhaps the most perfect incarnation of the ecclesiastical conscience may be seen in the Pharisee whom we meet on the pages of the New Testament. He "tithed mint, anise, and cummin, but forgot justice, mercy, and truth." That is, he scrupulously counted out his smallest garden herbs, his onions, leeks, and garlic, tied them in neat bundles, and set aside every tenth bundle as an offering unto the Lord. For so the law, the law of tithes, required. But he was utterly unconcerned about the equity, honesty, or loving-kindness of his relations or dealings with his neighbor in the practical affairs of daily life; because these things, forsooth, were not particularly specified in his ritual code. He "made the law of God of none effect through his traditions." So Christ declared, — and then he gave an illustrative instance. "It is written, Thou shalt honor thy

father and thy mother." Filial obedience, filial duty, was one of the most sacred obligations of the moral law. "But ye say, If a man shall say to his father and his mother, it is Korban" (that is, "dedicated to God"), "by whatsoever thou mightest be benefited by me, he shall be free from the law of his father and his mother." That is, if he proclaimed, "My time, my talents, my energy, are all to be devoted to the study and practice of the ceremonial law," then, without a qualm of conscience, he might suffer his aged and dependent parents to starve, for he was doing a better thing than caring for them. He was serving God directly. So filial duty, like every other obligation, might be commuted into ecclesiastical observance. These Pharisees went by the scores to prison, ay, to the cross and stake, rather than touch a bit of swine's flesh or eat their bread with ceremonially unclean hands; but they never were leaders or even followers in any great movement of reform, any battle for justice or right. For them the scruple always hid the principle, the taper blotted out the sun. No wonder such men would rather die than cross a heathen threshold, while yet they hesitated not to crucify the Son of God.

And the Pharisee has his successors in all times. In the Middle Ages pious ecclesiastics conscientiously burned at the stake saintly men, their brothers, for the absence of a conjunctive particle in their creed or a slightly variant accent in the metaphysical explanation of mysteries which no man can ever understand;

and yet they did not so much as "peep or mutter" against the crying evils and injustices that devastated the common life of humanity in those days.

In the early half of the nineteenth century the Church of England was rent by fierce dissensions over doctrinal and ritual questions. Clergymen were hounded out of the Church for certain views about the composite authorship of the Pentateuch or peculiar methods of conducting Divine Worship. Meanwhile, the working classes of Great Britain were suffering incredible wrongs from the rapacity and greed of employers.

Fourteen and fifteen hours a day, for a few cents of wages, half-naked women and girls dragged heavy tram-cars loaded with coal through the dark, damp tunnels of the mines. They fell victims to terrible diseases and to the lusts of bestial men. Little children, from five years old and upward, sat through the same long hours, in the terrifying solitude and gloom, with nothing to do but to open and shut a gate for a passing car, and, if they survived, they came out imbeciles. And yet the Church of England never recorded an official protest against such iniquities; because, forsooth, it was not her business. That was a secular affair. She was too absorbed in her canons and rubrics. And when that noble layman, Lord Shaftesbury, arose to do mighty battle for the oppressed, he not only met with little sympathy from the Church, but he was solemnly denounced and strenuously opposed by her Bishops.

And the ecclesiastical conscience is not dead yet. Not long since I made a journey through our Southland. I saw while there a great cotton factory. It was full of little children, boys and girls from eight years and upward. Torn from their beds at four o'clock in the morning, they are sent before daylight to their work among the flying spindles and clattering looms, in a dust-laden atmosphere. There they toil unremittingly for over twelve hours. They are stunted and dwarfed physically, often maimed, sometimes killed, always mentally and morally sapped. A personal friend of mine, a clergyman of great ability, heard the cry of these children. He flung himself without reserve into the fight to secure to them the right to a normal, happy childhood and some measure of education. If he had devoted himself to tinkering with canons and fussing about rituals, he might have become a prominent divine. But his Bishop heartily disapproved of his absorption in secular affairs. And in order to fight for human right and justice, in order to champion the oppressed, he had to request his deposition from the sacred ministry. And the request was immediately granted.

To-day, thank God, the conscience of the nation is being aroused mightily by the revelation of unmitigated graft in politics, and apparently unlimited dishonesty in the management of our big business affairs. But the Church maintains a discreet silence about such matters. Whatever individual Churchmen may do and say, the Church officially is not a

leader, often she is not even a follower, in this great movement for common righteousness. She absorbs herself in her canons and rituals. Recently a convention of business men — insurance commissioners — felt moved, largely, perhaps, from commercial reasons, to put themselves on record as condemning the iniquitous practices of our great insurance companies. But the council of the great Diocese of New York refused even to second a resolution asserting in the mildest and most general terms an official disapproval of such methods of business.

Does not the ecclesiastical conscience still lay its paralyzing hand upon the free utterance and activity of the Church? And so long as it does, my friends, the Church will not and cannot perform her appointed function; cannot exert her rightful influence; nor even can she win her due respect from the world about her. For the world rightly looks to the Church for moral vision and ethical leadership. And if she cannot or will not fulfil that expectation, if she does not raise up a generation of seers and prophets, she must shrink and shrivel and become effete. "Where no vision is, the people perish." This is her Divine function, to nourish, quicken, and inspire the common conscience of the whole people with clear and positive revelations of the moral ideal. God give her grace in these times to fulfil that mission!

I have time for only a few words upon the other form of the legal conscience; namely, the commercial

conscience. That, to my mind, is the greatest moral peril of this age and land.

The law of the land constitutes a more or less rough or imperfect approximation toward the ideal of justice and equity in the ordinary relations of men. Our common law is the crystallization out of the experience of the Anglo-Saxon race of its average judgments as to what is right and equitable. Upon that foundation is built a superstructure of statutes, called forth from time to time by practical exigencies. Those statutes are sometimes good, sometimes bad, sometimes indifferent. When one watches the course of our legislative bodies and sees how they manufacture laws, almost off-hand sometimes, now at the dictation of railroad and corporation lawyers, and now at the command of a political boss with a view to securing special privileges for favored classes, and again as a mere play to the galleries to meet popular clamor or the demand of a labor-union, one realizes how rude an approximation to justice such statutes make.

The question is, Is such a system of law, so made, an adequate standard by which the morally sensitive business man — particularly the Christian business man — may satisfy his conscience and square his dealings? I should answer that question with an emphatic No. And yet I think a very common answer to-day is Yes. There are three grades of honesty on the market. They have been characterized as honesty, law-honesty, and dishonesty. It is the

second grade which is apt to satisfy the commercial conscience of to-day. It is at a premium. Whatever escapes the penalties of the statute is legitimate and allowable, however it may break the principles of truth, honor, or equity. We had a frank illustration of that fact not long ago in the naïve defence, set up by a paid attorney, of the iniquitous methods of a certain great corporation. The corporation in question had built up its tremendous power and monopoly by means of a system of secret rebates, agreed upon with the railroads, which gave it an utterly unfair advantage over all its rivals. By means of this instrument it crushed its competitors. It resorted to a policy of ruthless commercial assassination. The defence was, "At that time there was no statute against rebates. Since the statute has been passed, the policy has been abandoned." The question of fact as to whether the policy has been abandoned or not, it seems to me, is debatable. But admitting that, the naïve defence and confession give us a true picture of the average commercial conscience. Whatever is legal, whatever is not liable to statutory penalty, is legitimate, ay, is right, however it may contravene all the principles of the natural law of equity. The statute is held so close to the eye that it hides the moral law; the taper blots out the sun.

The commercial conscience sometimes goes further yet. Whatever, by hook or crook, by legal trick or technicality, can be made to evade the penalty of the

statute, is legitimate and allowable. That constitutes much of the business of the big corporation lawyer of to-day; that is what he is paid his enormous fees for, — to find a road through or around the vexatious statute, and so to secure the right of way for the questionable transaction. I once had to respond to the toast, "The Three Learned Professions." I tried to show the unities and sympathies among the three. The physician and the minister were concerned with the relief and service of suffering humanity. The minister and the lawyer, as indeed all honest men, were interested in the establishment of justice and equity. I was instantly and frankly answered on this wise by a corporation lawyer present: "The little lawyer of other days may have been interested in little questions of personal justice and equity. But in this electric age the big lawyer has no concern in such petty matters. He is interested only in making big business go." And I had to confess the practical truth of the rebuttal. Read the story of the Standard Oil Corporation, the Beef Trust, or the insurance companies recently under investigation, if you want confirmation of the facts I have been asserting.

Thomas Jefferson once said, with reference to negro slavery in the South, "When I remember that a just God reigns, I tremble for the future of the nation." And when I face the commercial conscience of to-day and remember that a just God reigns, I tremble for the future of this people. Per-

haps the reason why some of us do not tremble is because, however vociferously we confess His name in our creeds of a Sunday, we do not really believe that a just God reigns. There is nothing more subtly undermining to those foundations of eternal righteousness which alone can permanently exalt a nation than this same commercial conscience.

When I think of our young men going out into business careers from the nurture of Christian homes and the high-toned training of our schools and colleges, bearing with them noble enthusiasms, lofty ideals, and tender consciences, I tremble for their future. For there is nothing so blinding to moral vision and disintegrating to fine principles as this same corrosive atmosphere of the commercial code.

Thank God that there are signs everywhere of a new awakening of moral conviction, ay, and of righteous indignation, among the common people. For with the common people lies always the true conscience of a nation. Thank God, especially, for educators who will speak out, boldly and plainly, to our young men, in whom is the hope of the future, as did President Butler of Columbia one year ago to an incoming class of Freshmen. Listen to his words. I would that they could be repeated to every college man in this country to-day, that they could be burned into every conscience which is not yet calloused.

"Put bluntly, the situation which confronts Americans to-day is due to lack of moral principle.

New statutes may be needed, but statutes will not put moral principle where it does not exist. The greed of gain and the greed for power have blinded men to the old-time distinction between right and wrong. Both among business men and at the bar are to be found advisers, counted shrewd and successful, who have substituted the penal code for the moral law as the standard of conduct. Right and wrong have given way to the subtler distinction between legal, not legal, and illegal; or better, perhaps, between honest, law-honest, and dishonest. This new triumph of mind over morals is bad enough in itself; but when, in addition, its exponents secure material gain and professional prosperity, it becomes a menace to our integrity as a people.

"Against this casuistry of the counting-house and the law-office, against this subterfuge and deceit, real character will stand like a rock. This university and all universities" (and he might have well added all the pulpits in the land) "must keep clearly in view before themselves and the public the real meaning of character; and they must never tire of preaching that character, and character alone, makes knowledge, skill, and wealth a help rather than a harm to those who possess them and to the community as a whole." No amount of benefactions and charities from the proceeds of ill-gotten gains can be offered as a substitute for such character.

Meanwhile, it is the paramount duty of every Christian in this present age to see to it that he does

not rest content with any low, convenient, and artificial code of conduct, such as the established good form of society, the technical pieties or proprieties of the Church, the conventions of the commercial world, nor yet even the statutes of the land. But let him insist upon forming his conscience by that natural law of the Kingdom of God, the moral ideal as revealed in Christ Jesus. Let him search himself through and through, in all that he does and says and thinks, with the old-fashioned but not obsolete Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule, and the law of love. Let him test himself always by that supreme and only sufficient test, the mind of Christ. Let this be his uncompromising watchword, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

CHAPTER V

THE VALUE OF A MAN

Isaiah xiii. 12. "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir."

DURING the terrible disaster in New York harbor, when the ships of the North German Lloyd line were burning at their wharves, certain tug captains are said to have coolly passed by, or even ruthlessly ridden down, struggling, drowning men, who had flung themselves into the water to escape fiery death; and given chase instead to the floating bales of cotton which had been thrown from burning deck and dock. The reason was this: the rescued cotton would be worth forty dollars a bale on the market. The rescued man would fetch nothing. And therefore, in the eyes of these creatures, a bale of cotton was more precious than a man.

We shudder at the story. Its calculating inhumanity sets our hearts aflame with indignation. And yet are we altogether guiltless of the very same thing? May not some prophet of God lay his hand upon you or me and say, "Thou art the man"? For, after all, this incident is but an unusually crude and frank expression of a spirit quite prevalent in our modern world, though it generally appears under less crass

and shocking forms. It is the spirit of commercialism. It is the mind or the habit of thought which in its estimate of values invariably puts *things* above men, merchandise above manhood.

It was this spirit which our prophet found incarnate in ancient Babylon, — that Babylon which afterward, in the language of New Testament Apostle and seer, became the mystic symbol and type of the kingdom of this world as over against the Kingdom of God. Isaiah looked yearningly forward to the time when in the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven to this earth, in the setting up of the celestial civilization in the world, the Lord "should make a man more precious than fine gold; yea, a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." But that time has not yet fully come, and the prophetic vision and promise still await fulfilment. Our modern civilization has still lingering about it a strong Babylonish flavor, and the name of the ancient city is not an unfitting symbol of what to-day we call *the world* — that is, human society as organized apart from the will of God, and as distinguished from that ideal state when human society shall be organized quite according to the will of God, when the will of the Father-king shall be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. We may have — we surely have — made great advances in the Christian ages toward the goal of the prophetic vision. But we are a long way off from it still. Thank God, we no longer openly sell men on the slave block for gold.

And in our theories of humanity, our ideals of society, even in our common law, we put men above things. But in our *practice* — industrial, social, national, and individual — we still value things above men, and especially do we value merchandise above manhood.

Indeed, commercialism may be said to be *the* characteristic sin of the land and age in which we live. This is, or has been (for, thank God, there are some signs of the mitigation of our materialism), a most materialistic age, and we are essentially a commercial people. And the Babylonian standard, the Babylonian estimate, — in a word, if I may coin one, *Babylonianism*, — affords the constant temptation of the modern world and of the American people in particular.

Naturally, the most vivid illustrations and most direct expressions of the Babylonian temper are to be found in our industrial world. The most striking, to me the most appalling, thing about the business world is, not its inhumanity, but its prevailing and persistent dehumanity, if I may use the word — the way human beings are depersonalized and dehumanized in its speech, its thought, its practice. Labor, for instance, is habitually thought and spoken of, not as the toil of human hands, the sweat — sometimes the bloody sweat — of human brows, the thought and skill of human brains; ay, the daring risk, the courage, the heroic self-sacrifice of human souls as it is in all dangerous occupations; nay, but this strangely vital and personal composite

of sweat and blood and tears, of brains and heart and soul, becomes, in the language and practice of the business world, simply a commodity, so much stuff to be bought in the cheapest market and sold in the dearest. We discuss its price as dispassionately, we bull and bear its market as coolly, as we do the market in pig-lead or fertilizers. Laborers are commonly termed "hands"; they are the instruments, the tools of industry; they are to the economic eye like the steam in the boiler, the electricity in the dynamo, or the power in the waterfall, simply so much capacity for production; in the estimation of the industrial and commercial world, men become things, and generally about the cheapest things, with which that world has to deal. If a machine breaks down in a great factory, this is a calamity. Repairs must be made, and they cost money; a delay ensues, and that costs money. But if a man is maimed or crushed, if he loses limb or life, it may cost a small doctor's bill, or possibly — provided the ignorance and weakness of the poor sufferer or his friends are able to cope at the game of law with the legal cunning and the influence of the great corporation — a suit for damages: but the grind of production goes on unhindered, because another man stands eager to take the place of the toiler who has fallen out of the ranks. Men are cheaper than machines. If the price of nails sinks below the figure which the greed of commerce demands, a trust is formed, factories are closed, and

thousands are thrown out of employment. Misery ensues, families fall upon public charity or starve, multitudes are shorn of the means of warding off sickness and death. But what of that? The price of nails is enhanced, and nails are worth more than men.

The Napoleon of finance must turn his millions. The bargain counter must be baited for the feminine soul. Our luxurious dames must be able to boast of their marvellous cheap purchases. And therefore the sweat shop must reek with its physical and moral filth, and the shop-girl must be forced (sometimes under her employer's deliberate advice) to sell her body into shame that she may eke out her pitiful wage to living proportions. What if souls are damned thereby? Bargains are worth more than souls.

With the tremendous and unprecedented organization of our industrial and commercial world, all personal relation between employer and employee has been practically destroyed, and consequently personal consideration rendered nearly impossible. The other day a new consolidation of railroad interests was effected. Immediately a man was sent out on the road to reduce forces in all the offices of the system. Fewer clerks must do the work. It is a notorious fact that railroad offices are very frequently undermanned. But, nevertheless, an increase must be had of one per cent in the annual dividend on the preferred stock of the corporation, and that one

per cent increase was of more worth than the welfare of thousands of faithful employees and their dependent families. The increase of work due to the reduction of the clerical force might grind and use men up faster, but what of that? Men are the cheapest things on the market.

Every pastor knows what this absorption of men in the industrial mill signifies to spiritual life and religious work. Let me give you a typical leaf out of my own pastoral history. It tells a tale that has been repeated again and again in my own experience. A young man comes into the parish. He is regular in his attendance at church and devout in worship. He is earnest and eager for work. He is put into some position in the church's activities and devotes himself faithfully and efficiently to the work assigned him. But by and by (alack the day), he gets a "good position," as it is called, with some prominent firm. Business increases. But instead of increasing their office force, they begin to work him overtime. They claim and absorb his evenings. He gives up his church work in consequence. He has no mind, no energy, no interest, no time, even, left for it. Business claims him wholly, body, mind, and soul. By and by he drops off in his church attendance. You ask him why? He answers that he is so exhausted by his week's work, night and day, that he is too tired to turn out on Sunday. Or even worse, the firm must have him at the office for extra work one or two Sundays out of every three. And

so the man's religious work ceases, and his spiritual life is absorbed in the rush and grind of commercialism. He ceases to be a man in the highest sense of the word; he becomes a mere calculating machine for the corporation that employs him, to be used until worn out and then cast aside for a new one. That man's manhood, his spiritual manhood, has been sacrificed for gold; and even then *he* does not get the gold. Such is the story of many a clerk's and bookkeeper's life.

But it is not only the poor or the dependent whose manhood is held cheaper than merchandise; the rich themselves often estimate their own manhood as of less worth than their gold. Take one illustration from our educational world. The son of a wealthy family is sent off to college to get an education, as the phrase runs. Look at the course marked out for the boy, and in many a case you will find it something like this: the classics are eliminated altogether, because they will never tell in the money market. The humanities generally are rigorously restricted for the same reason. Philosophy and History are ignored, for they have no speculative value. Only the modern commercial languages are taught, tongues that will tell in trade. The education is made strictly practical and technical. It is a wholly business training; that is, everything that ministers primarily to general culture, everything that would make of the boy a well-rounded, well-developed, well-disciplined man, a

man of the fullest and richest manhood possible,— all that is sacrificed to the immediately practical and technical. This is as it is because the father wants his son to be, not the best sort of a man, but the best sort of a money-maker, a machine such as you may find in any of our mints for stamping out bright coin from the raw bullion. That influence of commercialism is being felt everywhere throughout our educational system. Our colleges and schools are largely yielding to it. Many of them are sinking into mere technical schools, training for trade and business instead of giving the most generous culture and developing the richest and largest manhood.

Again that squint of commercialism affects our vision and judgment in estimating our national strength and well-being. Do we ask, "Is the national life sound and healthy? Is the country strong and safe? Are we a prosperous people? Are we developing the true ideal of our national life and character?" Ask such questions, and nine times out of ten the answer comes in terms material rather than vital, moral, or spiritual. You are pointed to the smoke belching from the factory chimney, to the full dinner pail of the workman, to the large dividends upon invested capital, to the clearing-house reports and savings-bank accounts, to the estimate of per capita wealth, to the excess of exports over imports, to the extension of commerce and the acquisition of new markets, to anything,

and in fact everything, except that which alone constitutes the strength of a State; namely, the patriotism of her sons, the manhood of her citizens, their intelligent devotion to national principles, their love of justice, righteousness, and freedom, and the courage and self-sacrifice with which they will stand for these principles. I sometimes think that our government itself is fast being made a machine for promoting commercial schemes for privileged parties rather than an institution for protecting the common rights of the common people and developing the patriotism of the average citizen. I hold no brief for any political party. I stand here for no particular policy, for expansion or anti-expansion, for imperialism or anti-imperialism. All these are more or less external matters and surface questions. The question that probes to the heart of our American civilization, the question that tests the essential quality of our national life, is this: What are the prevailing temper and mind of our people? Do we, in estimating our national prosperity and well-being, count things above men, or men above things? Merchandise above manhood, or manhood above merchandise? Principle above pelf, or pelf above principle? That civilization and national life which count the gold more precious than the man, however fat and luxuriant and even phosphorescently brilliant on the surface, are rotten at the heart. It is its human wealth and not its material wealth which measures the prosperity of a nation; that is,

the well-being of its citizens and not its accumulation of substance.

It is also far too frequently so with our personal lives. Ask what a man is worth, and the answer comes almost invariably, not in terms of character, of manhood, or mental, moral, or spiritual values, but in terms of the market, stocks and bonds and lands and houses, in values measurable by gold. That shows the standard prevailing in the popular mind; it is the standard that makes gold more precious than the man. And men are living by that standard every day. They are daily trading off the spiritual for the material, because according to this accepted standard of values, the material is of more worth than the spiritual. For instance, why is faith so weak among men? Why does religion, particularly the religion of Jesus Christ, have so small a part in their thoughts, and still less in their lives? I do not believe that it is intellectual difficulties, the difficulties raised by the discoveries of our modern science, the higher criticism, and other learning. I do not believe that it is these things that keep most of the men who stand aloof from Christ away from Him. Nay, most of them do not even know of these things, and if they do know of them, they do not stop to think of them twice. Nay, it is moral difficulties, it is spiritual obstacles, that keep men away from Christ. It is because they know that the convenient conventional codes of respectability and honesty and

honor prevailing in the business and commercial world will not stand in the searching light of Christ, because they know that the precepts, laws, and ideals of Christ are impracticable in the business world as it is at present organized; because of such knowledge as this, be it consciously or only half consciously held, they stand aloof from Christ. They cannot make money as easily in the ways they are now making it and in such masses as they are now making it, if they consistently follow Christ; and they care more for money than they do for Christ; gold is more precious than the Man, the Son of Man. And therefore they will have none of Him. And I honor them more than I do the hypocrite of the Church, who, while loudly professing to reverence Christ and even serve Him, yet daily uses business methods which stultify and profane the very name of Christian. The spirit of commercialism, the spirit which puts things above men and merchandise above manhood, rapidly dulls all spiritual sensibility, destroys all capacity for faith in the unseen and spiritual, all ability to respond to Christ, which is, after all, the truest description of faith. Let me illustrate: Here is a boy still within the sacred walls of home, a boy with clean-cut features, with frank, fearless eyes that look straight and steady at you without shrinking; soulful eyes are they, for in their depths you discern the beauty of a transparent and unsullied soul. He is religious in the deepest sense of the word. He is responsive and loyal to Christ.

He is full of generous ideals, high enthusiasms, spiritual aspirations. It is an inspiration to be with him. He has noble ideas about honor and truth and principle. Perhaps, in our worldly wisdom, we smile and call them quixotic. He will not swerve a hair's-breadth from the right line of honesty and justice,—no, not for anybody or anything. He will not compromise his standards of conscience or trail his banners in the dust,—no, not for the world. He realizes the poet's ideal of the youth who, "by the vision splendid is on his way attended . . . trailing clouds of glory do we come from God who is our home."

But after a while your boy goes out of the home life into the business world; you come across him by and by grown into middle age, and you see a change. Perhaps there is nothing overtly bad or positively immoral about him. He has been too prudent and parsimonious to spend his substance extravagantly upon low indulgences and the sins of the flesh. But you find the cold, calculating eye and the shrewd, practical temper of the accomplished and successful money-maker. Everything is measured by money standards now. He smiles indulgently at his youthful notions of sensitive honor and transparent sincerity and absolute justice and all that. They are impracticable ideals, if one would get along in the world; too fragile ware for human nature's daily use; well enough for bric-a-brac to be kept under glass cases on parlor

mantelpieces, but by no means to be trusted in the kitchens of life, where the food is to be cooked. One needs tougher ware there. He has no more visions. He would call them dreams, illusions, delusions, now. Conventional respectability is now to him a sufficient standard of conduct, and the commercial code — what is legitimate or even legal, what is allowed by the trade rather than what is essentially and inherently true and righteous and honest and just — is a high enough law of conscience. The man has become no longer a man in the best sense of that word, but a mere sordid and shrivelled money-bag. He has sold his soul, his spiritual capacity, for gold. And yet you cannot put your finger on any single definite bargain like Faust's, wherein the sale was consummated. No, it was here and there, gradually and imperceptibly, that he lost himself, his best self, that noble, beautiful, ideal manhood, whose rudimentary possibilities showed so fair in the face of his youth. For souls are lost, not so much by the sudden damnations of great crimes as by the shrinkage and shrivelling of an insidious worldliness.

Is not this sin of commercialism, of Babylonianism, this sin that puts the thing above the man and merchandise above manhood, the representative sin of our age and of our land? Does it not threaten to sap the higher life and manhood of our civilization, our nation, our religion, and our individual souls? By it we are getting things just upside

down in our industrial and commercial world. We have exactly reversed all right relations. Industries were meant to feed men, but we are turning men into the food of our industries. We are making of trade a huge Minotaur to which we deliberately sacrifice the freshness and beauty of our choicest youth, the culture and full-rounded development of our manhood and the lives of our poor. We are making wealth not simply the material basis upon which a higher, nobler life is to be builded, but we are making it the whole of life. We are putting things above men and men beneath things. We are making men the servants and things the masters. There are many reforms proposed for remedying the evils of our industrial and social world; some wise, some otherwise. But not one will avail aught permanently and really until we arrive at a new viewpoint from which to get our whole vision of life and its meaning; a new table of values, a new standard of estimates for measuring all things. It must be the viewpoint from which our prophet got his vision; it must be the standard which Christ established. We must make a "man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." We must recognize that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth," but in the wealth of his service unto God and fellow-men, and the richness of his personality. We must reorganize our industrial and social and educational world upon that basis. We have gotten

it upside down. We must make wealth the servant of life rather than life the slave of wealth. We must put men above things, rather than things above men. Then, and then only, will the lives and souls of our toilers be worth more than the product of their industry, and the manhood of ourselves and our sons than the gains of our shrewdness and greed.

God help us all to stand stoutly, bravely, and unwaveringly for a true idealism against this threatening flood of materialism, the idealism of the Kingdom of God as against the materialism of the kingdom of this world; until it shall come to pass even in the most commercial realms of our common life, even in the industrial and political world, that "a man shall be more precious than fine gold; even than the golden wedge of Ophir."

CHAPTER VI

THE MEANING OF SACRIFICE

2 Samuel xxiii. 14–18. "And David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. And David longed, and said, 'Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!' And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate and took it and brought it to David; nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord. And he said, 'Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this; is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?' Therefore he would not drink it."

THIS is a beautiful story of devotion and chivalry. The warrior king is fighting for the recovery of his native village, Bethlehem, now in possession of a hostile garrison of Philistines. Wearied and heated with the battle, he bethinks him of the old well, hard by the gate of the town. Perhaps even now from his stronghold he can discern the fronds of the palm trees that shelter it. Often as a shepherd-lad coming in hot and tired from the fields he had slaked his thirst in its clear waters. He is seized with an unsuppressible longing, half physical and half sentimental, to which he thoughtlessly gives utterance in the exclamation, "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem,

which is by the gate!" — and then forgets it as he goes on about his work. But three of his mighty men have overheard the sigh of their leader. And that is enough for them. Such is the fascination which this mighty personality exercises upon all his followers, such is the devotion and love he has inspired in their hearts, that his lightest wish is more than law to them. It is their joy, the meat and drink of their lives, to do his will. It is worth any peril, any sacrifice, to win that joy. The three make a sudden dash across the intervening plain, break through the startled line of Philistine sentinels, fill a jug at the well by the gate, and carry it back to their master.

And the King receives their gift as an holy thing. The water in that earthen jug is to him no longer water. It has been turned into blood; blood more sacred than the blood of beasts which is offered upon the sacrificial altar of the tabernacle, for it is the blood of human sacrifice, the blood of men who have jeoparded their lives on his behalf. To slake his thirst therein, to use it for mere personal gratification, were a desecration, a sacrilege. And so he pours it out solemnly as a libation to Jehovah. No wonder men loved such a king.

There is no finer story of devotion and chivalry on the pages of history or literature than that.

And it is not only a tale of devotion and chivalry; if we read it aright, it is also a parable, an allegory of life, of life as it is and as it ought to be. Did

you ever stop to think of how much of human life and personality enters into all the commonest things we use so lightly and thoughtlessly? How they cost human toil, peril, and sacrifice? How our very bread is made of sweat and tears and blood? And did you ever realize how sacred and holy that fact makes all these things, and how impossible it ought to be, therefore, for any right-minded man to use them carelessly or for any merely selfish and personal ends?

Take the common and commonplace blessings and privileges of our civilization, things we enjoy and live on every day, and just because they are so common and commonplace, never estimate their cost. Did you ever think of the countless lives that have been spent in toil and peril, and perhaps laid down in blood, in order to redeem the wilderness from the grip of the jungle, the swamp, the forest, the savage, and the wild beast, and make it blossom as the rose? Did you ever think of the hosts of pioneers and heroes who, with the sweat of their brows and brains, — ay, and the blood of their hearts, — have slowly built up these institutions of commerce and learning which are the very life of our civilization? That whole civilization which we accept as a matter of course and enjoy often without a thought of gratitude, is cross-marked and blood-stained, if we would but see it so. And it ought to be a holy and sacred thing in our eyes.

Again, take the coarsest and most material substratum on which our common living is based, that which we sum up under the general name of wealth. And here I quote from another, who has said most clearly what I would say: "Do we realize how much of human life there is stored up in what we eat and drink and wear and spend and use? Food and raiment, fire and light, shelter and rest, are bought for us by the exposure of the lone shepherd on the mountain side, the weary weaver at her loom, the toiler in the sweat shop, the weather-beaten sailor before the mast, the engineer driving his train through storm and night and amidst hourly peril of life and limb, the miner in the bowels of the earth, the woodsman in the depths of the forest, the fisherman off the foggy banks, the ploughman in the monotonous furrow, the cook drudging in the kitchen, the wash-woman bending over the tub, the countless host of artisans and teamsters and common laborers who form the broad, firm base — the mudsills sunk out of sight and, alas, too often out of memory, upon which our civilization rests."

And yet, instead of giving to that labor the gratitude and reverence that are surely due to it, we for the most part bestow upon it only our contempt; we brand it as a disgrace, and look down upon them who do it; we complain bitterly if the laboring class be ignorant, stupid, vicious. Alas, what chance has it for the most part to be anything else but

ignorant, stupid, and vicious, so long as we, the privileged classes, so largely monopolize all the advantages of culture and religion, of enlightenment and refinement.

But to come back: Christian preachers often find fault with the modern man, particularly the modern American, because he makes too much of material wealth, because he esteems it too highly. It seems to me that the fault lies in just the opposite direction. We do not make enough of material wealth. We do not esteem it highly enough. We desire and seek it passionately, but we do not hold it sacred when it is won.

Again let me quote President Hyde of Bowdoin: "Because of the high human cost of material goods, all waste is wickedness, all ostentation is disgrace, all luxury that is not redeemed by the purposes of a a general refinement and culture, is criminal. The food and raiment which we waste is simply so much human toil and sacrifice which by our wastefulness we render null and void. The wealth and state which we ostentatiously display simply show the world how much of the vitality of other men and women we burn up in order to keep our poor selves going. To boast of riches, to take pride in luxury, is as though the engine should boast of the quantity of coal it could consume, regardless of work accomplished; as though the farm should be proud of the fertilizer spread upon its soil, regardless of the crop raised in return. What is the real nature of the

idle rich? Precisely what do they amount to in the world? To eat the bread that other men have toiled to plant and reap and transport and cook and serve; to wear the silk and woollen that other women have spun and woven and cut and sewed; to lie on a couch that other hands have spread and under a roof that other arms have reared; and not that alone, for we all do as much,—but to consume these things upon themselves with no sense of gratitude toward the toiling men and women who bring these gifts, with no strenuous effort to give back to them something as valuable and precious as that which they have given to us; that is the meanness and selfishness and sin and shame of wealth that is idle and irresponsible. Against riches, as such, no sane man has a word to say. Against rich men who are idle and irresponsible, against rich women who are ungrateful and unserviceable, the moral insight cries out in righteous indignation and brands them as parasites, receiving all and giving nothing in return; gulping down the life-blood of their fellows without so much as a 'thank you' in return."

The day is fast coming, thank God, when so to live will be by all esteemed shameful as now it is by many esteemed honorable and desirable. The day is coming when all our material possessions shall be seen to bear the ineradicable marks of that toil, that peril, that sacrifice of human life which have bought them for us. And then they shall be

regarded as far too high and holy to be spent in mere personal gratification, much less in ostentation or luxury; for that were sacrilege: but they shall be poured out abundantly as a sacrifice to God in the widest and wisest service of His children, our brothers and sisters.

Again, take the knowledge and culture of the student. Upon the outside of our hymnals, prayer-books, and Bibles we sometimes put the sign of the cross in token that they tell the story of the great sacrifice of the Son of Man. Most appropriately, also, might we put that sign upon the text-books used in our schools and colleges; upon our arithmetics and histories, geographies, geologies, and astronomies, our law-books and our manuals of surgery and medicine. For in these are garnered the precious fruits of endless self-sacrifice upon the part of innumerable men. Did you ever take reverently into your hand one of these common text-books and think back through to their beginnings all the long, painful processes by which the knowledge it contains was slowly gathered, sifted, tested, and finally crystallized into those familiar propositions? Think of it,—the midnight oil and sweat of brain of multitudes of scholars, the glad surrender of all the lower gratifications and pleasures of life to make room for the exercise of a deeper devotion to the pursuit of truth. Think of the toil, think of the perils of the army of discoverers in the fields of geographical exploration; think of the seers of

science — as many as the martyred saints of religion — who have willingly laid down their lives that humanity might enjoy the blessings and immunities that proceed from the prevalence of scientific truth; think of the heroes who have spent their substance, their strength, and their blood that we might have those statutes and legal precedents — commonplace to us now — which secure and protect our fundamental rights and liberties. I tell you, if we thought of all these things, our very school-books would become a sacred literature; we should handle them reverently. These, too, perhaps we should stamp with crosses and gild the edges of their leaves. Or, better still, we should use the knowledge, the culture, the power, and skill we derive from them for none but the highest and most unselfish purposes. Ah, the wealth of human life, of human toil and sacrifice, that enter into the cost of all our education, our common knowledge, our professional equipment, — never can it be reckoned or estimated. How can any one who knows this, how can any one who thinks of this, be satisfied to use such knowledge, to use abilities trained and cultivated by such hallowed means, for any merely personal ends, whether as power for the amassing of the material comforts of life or as culture for his own æsthetic enjoyment? It is like taking the consecrated chalice from the altar and making it the wassail bowl of a drunken feast. Nay, we must pour it out as a libation unto the Lord in the highest,

best, and wisest service we can render unto humanity; for it is the blood of men, of men who have gone in jeopardy of their lives to win for us the truth; and it is fit for sacrifice only.

So, too, preëminently is it with our moral and spiritual privileges. The Church's sacraments and means of grace, her spiritual nature and admonition, the Bible with its mighty inspirations, the common conscience of a Christian community, and the moral standards of a Christian civilization, — all these broad bases of right thinking and right feeling which lift us above the mire of animalism and maintain us on high levels of clean and happy living; did you ever pause and follow these down to their foundations? Did you ever think how they are every one bottomed upon Jesus Christ's self-sacrifice; how they have, for your sake and mine, been built to their present proportions by the martyrdom of saints, the perils and toils of missionaries, the faithful, patient labors of self-sacrificing fathers and mothers, pastors and teachers? These, too, bear the marks of human blood. And he who discerns those marks surely cannot like a spiritual miser hoard these priceless possessions for his own; he cannot use them merely for the nourishment of his own spiritual life and the fattening of his own soul. If he does, they will be found to fail of their very purpose. He must become missionary in mind and temper. He must spend them in service and sacrifice.

And so I might go on. But I have said enough, surely, to prove that as all life is sacrificial in its origin, so it must be sacrificial in its expenditure. It is too sacred, too high and holy a thing, it has cost too much to spend in mere self-gratification, whether in the quality of its tastes that gratification be high or low. It must be poured out unto the Lord in the unselfish blessing of our fellows. And only in such sacrifice is it found that life comes to its bloom and expands into its full beauty and puts forth its richest fragrance, and only in such service is it that we may find the completeness of life and experience its highest joy.

All that I have been trying to say comes to its perfect expression in that highest act of Christian worship which we celebrate at the altar Sunday after Sunday. Did you ever think of this implication of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? We come to the sanctuary rail and receive the bread and wine because we know that "except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, we have no life in us." It is by His sacrifice that we are enabled to live our highest and best life. Ay, and just so it means "except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the sons of men, we have no life in us." It is by their sacrifice, it is through the expenditure of other lives, that our life comes to possess its most ordinary privileges and to enjoy its most commonplace and unregarded blessings. And he who has caught the true inspiration of this symbolic act

will go forth from each holy communion to consecrate the life which he has received to its highest and holiest purpose by sacrificial service to his fellow-men. God help us all so to learn this meaning of life, and so to find the joy of living.

CHAPTER VII

THE PERSONAL QUALITY OF GRACE

St. Mark ix. 27. "Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up; and he arose."

Acts iii. 6–7. "Then Peter said, 'Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.' And he took him by the right hand; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength."

My theme is suggested by that phrase which occurs in every Apostolic benediction, "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." You remember the stories of the texts. They are both stories of men who were down, and how they were lifted up by the grace of Jesus Christ. And in both instances that grace was ministered in the same way — by personal contact, by the friendly hand.

The first is the case of the epileptic boy. The Jewish physicians had prescribed for him. The Apostles had prayed for him. But all to no avail. Then came Jesus Himself fresh from the glory of the Mount of Transfiguration. He gave no prescription. He uttered no prayer. He simply held out a friendly hand; and the boy grasped it and arose.

The second is the story of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. He was impotent

in his feet from his mother's womb. He had never walked. Daily he was carried by his friends and laid there at the gate called Beautiful to appeal for charity. And he got it. The throngs of worshippers passing in and out bestowed upon him their pity and their alms. But still he was down. Charity could not buy strength for the impotent feet. But one day there came in the midst of the crowd two plain and simple men, clad in peasants' garb, girt with the fisherman's coat of Galilee. Doubtless the lame beggar, as he takes their measure with his skilled professional eye, expects little of them in the way of alms. But still he urges his plea. And the answer comes, "Silver and gold have I none," says Peter (the alms, the charity of the ordinary giver were not his to give), "but such as I have give I thee." And what he had was the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. And thus he gave it: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," he cries, "rise up and walk." "And he took him by the right hand; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength, and he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered with them into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God."

Which things are allegory as well as history. These stories are parables, pictures of what the grace of Jesus Christ really is, and of how the Master and His Apostles always ministered that grace.

The Latin theology has made sad havoc with

the great words of our religion. It has persistently depersonalized them. It has emptied them of life and made them mere abstractions, dead things.

For example, there is that tremendous word "faith." What does it mean? Latin theology has said practically that it means accepting doctrines, dogmas, creeds; holding fast "the deposit of faith." God is the absentee landlord of this present world. He lives in a far-off heaven. Thither, too, Christ has gone now to sit at His right hand forevermore. But He has kindly left in the keeping of His Church a supply of tickets of admission into that heavenly home where God and Christ now dwell. These tickets are to be had in the form of orthodox creeds, systems of doctrines, "the faith once delivered to the saints." If you get your ticket and hold it fast, so as not to lose it, and present it to the gate-keeper when you die, and it passes his scrutiny; if he pronounces it correct and duly countersigned, — then at last you may be admitted into the Presence, and finally find communion with God in Christ Jesus.

I turn to my New Testament, and I find that there faith means always a living trust in a living God, a personal trust in a personal Christ. In its feeblest form it is the touch upon the hem of his garment which brings healing and life to the weak and sin-sick soul. In its perfect measure it is that firm grasp upon the Father's hand, that clear, unclouded vision of the Master's face, that closeness of personal

contact and fulness of communion with Him, that absolute self-surrender to Him, which possess a man utterly with the mind and spirit of Christ and so with the joy, the confidence, the strength of that possession. That is what St. Paul means when he prays in the Epistle for to-day, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Now it matters not so much how long a man's creeds are, or how short; how many his dogmas, or how few, — nay, even how orthodox or how heterodox his religious philosophy, according to the doctors, — provided that through them he have that personal hold on the personal Christ. For doctrines and creeds will no more bring life and strength to a feeble soul than the prescriptions of the Jewish doctors brought health to the epileptic boy or the alms of the passers-by bought power for the impotent feet of the lame beggar. The touch of the living Christ alone can do that. And so faith is not a thing to be held, but it is the grasp that holds; and it holds the friendly hand of the Master that is extended to us.

So it is also with that other great word "grace." What sad havoc the Latin theology has played with that word. We listen to its teaching, and we hear much about "the grace of orders" and "the grace of sacraments," but little about "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." So dead and abstract, so

"thingy," to coin a word that seems to be demanded by the occasion, has this great word become in much of our teaching, that grace seems to be a kind of magic substance which can be done up in neat tissue-paper parcels, tied with blue ribbons and distributed by bishops, priests, and deacons only. It is a kind of bank deposit left by the departed Christ upon which the Church may draw checks! A charity fund established by His last will and testament from which the Church may dispense alms. These are figures that are actually used in manuals of instruction. For instance, I read the following in one such manual quite popular in our own church: "I wish to give you a sum of money in gold. I put the gold into a purse. Now I hand you the purse, and if you have the purse, you have the gold. Exactly so Christ would give you a grace. He puts that grace into a sacrament; the grace of regeneration, the seed of the spiritual life he puts into the sacrament of baptism; the nourishment of the spiritual life he puts into the Holy Communion; if you have the Sacrament, you have the grace."

I turn to my New Testament again, and I find that grace is the most personal of all personal words. It is the efflux and influx of one personality into another personality. It can never be divorced or separated from personality. The moment the divorce is attempted, that moment grace ceases to be. It is "graciousness, loving-kindness." And you cannot put graciousness, loving-kindness, into things.

You cannot tie them up in bundles and dole them out. Things, sacraments and the like, may be the media, the channels and the symbols, of that grace, but the grace itself is personal and can pass only from Person to person, the Person of the Living Christ to your personal soul.

Let me illustrate. Here are the impersonal alms doled out by an impersonal charity organization to a needy beggar. That is the grace of sacrament or means of grace ministered by the Church or the priest alone. Here is the birthday gift or remembrance of your loved one, prized not for its intrinsic value, for it may have little or none, but prized beyond measure because you find in it the visible and tangible expression of the love of your friend. That is the sacrament through which comes upon your soul the loving touch of the healing hand of the living personal Christ.

So must all the great words of your religion be construed into terms of personal relationship between your own soul and the Living Christ, if they are to have their full meaning to you. Faith in creeds will avail you little. But trust in the Living God is the very essence of the spiritual life. The grace of things, even though they be sacraments, is as impossible and absurd as the intelligence of things or the loving-kindness of things would be. It is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" that sometimes comes to us through things, but always from Him. Religion, the spiritual life, is essentially a matter

of personal contact, of personal communion. Grace is the friendly hand of the Living Christ stretched out to us. And faith is the eager, trusting human hand stretched out to lay hold on that loving grasp. Personal Christianity is friendship and fellowship with God in Christ Jesus.

Now all this throws light upon our own problems of Christian life and work; particularly does it throw light upon the great question, How shall we help "the man that is down"? And remember that term "the man that is down" is a relative term. It is a widely inclusive term. It means any one who in any sense is lower than we are; he who has scanter means of subsistence, or stands farther down in the social scale, or has had smaller opportunities for acquiring culture and knowledge, or who has a more uncertain moral footing than we have. Now how shall we help this brother that is down? Particularly, if we be Christians, how shall we mediate and transmit to him the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" which has so richly endowed our own lives with moral strength and spiritual joy?

The answer that comes with fatal facility to the ordinary mind is an answer that may be construed wholly in terms of things. It is charity in the popular acceptance of that word. "Silver and gold," and what silver and gold will buy, that is all the ordinary giver has to give to the impotent man, "the man who is down"; or, at most, prescriptions, advice, and counsel that often do not help.

That exhausts the whole demand of even Christian duty for many consciences. And alas, charity is in these days growing more and more impersonal. It is fast losing the old direct touch and relationship which formerly partially redeemed it. Some one has aptly defined *ordinary* charity as "giving something that you don't want to someone else." And *scientific* charity as "giving something that you don't want to somebody that doesn't want it." And *organized scientific* charity as "giving something that you don't want to an institution, an impersonal society, that it may give it to somebody that doesn't want it." But *Christian* charity as "giving something that you want to somebody that wants it more." He might have gone on to add that Christian love is giving yourself to somebody that wants you; giving your sympathy, your fellowship, to somebody that needs it, holding out the friendly hand to some feeble grasp that must have it or else sink into the Slough of Despond. Ah, that is what the world wants and needs in these days more than anything else,— fellowship, sympathy, personal contact, the grasp of hand in hand between the higher and the lower, the more and the less gifted, the people who stand erect upon sure footing and the people who struggle on the crumbling brink of moral despair. It is through that personal touch alone that the electric thrill of brotherhood can pass. Impersonal gifts, things, technical charity, are often an insulating medium, a break in the circuit. It is through per-

sonal contact alone that healing and strength can pass from the more abundant life to the more meagre. It is only through the graciousness of grace-full Christian characters that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ can be mediated and transmitted to those who need it. And yet all the conditions of our modern world are making that contact more and more difficult. The organization of our industrial world is setting employer and employed farther and farther apart. The great captain of industry does not any longer know the men who build up his fortune for him. They are no longer human beings to him. They become to him, of necessity, simply hands. He regards them but as tools. The prevailing industrial strife, the insane scramble for material gains which prevails on both sides in that strife, is making mutual understanding more and more difficult and mutual sympathy all but impossible. The segregation of classes, not only in social and commercial interests, but even in space, offers another almost insurmountable barrier. The rich, the respectable, the cultured, — yes, the church members, — gather on the avenues; and the poor, the hopeless, the ignorant, the unreached, are herded in the slums. As Dean Hodges quaintly describes the situation, "We have all the yeast in one pan and the sodden dough in another, and yet the hopeful people are expecting the bread to rise."

What shall we do? The duty is plain and press-

ing, and the opportunities of fulfilling it are homely and close at hand; so homely and so close at hand that we very commonly overlook them while seeking something larger and more dramatic to do. The duty is to cultivate diligently every possible personal relation that links our more abundant life to any meagre life which, in the industrial world, in society, in the domestic relation, we touch in our daily contacts; by personal interest in such other life to make that relationship more vital and more human, and thus to hold out at every opportunity not simply the purse, but the hand; to take pains to know something of that other life, its circumstances, its needs, its thoughts and feelings, its moral disabilities and handicap; and to give sympathy, fellowship, as well as material assistance. If every Christian family would get into such personal relations with one or more families in the slums, our problem of poverty would be practically solved. If every one who employs would get into such relations with the clerks in the office, the men in the factory, the servants in the household, it would go a long way toward healing the industrial strife, — a long, long way further than any amount of mere technical charity.

We have social settlements to do this thing for us by substitution, — technically and professionally, as it were, — but we must do it ourselves individually, each according to his opportunity. And yet in our very absorption in our charities, how often we forget

this! I read once in a poem concerning a certain knight, how,

> "the needy poor
> Flocked to his castle for the careless gift
> Of falling dole; but his esquire was faint
> From his exacting service, day and night."

And I thought of how many earnest, active Christian men and women there are who are busy all the time with boards and committees, charities and good works, and yet how often the overworked clerks and secretaries behind the desks and the servants in the household feel the raw edge of their overwrought temper, catch the hasty rebuke for every slip or mistake, but rarely hear the word of commendation for work well done, and, still more rarely, meet any evidence of personal sympathy with their personal concerns.

It is this that the man who is down needs most from us; not simply the hand with the purse in it, though he needs that often enough and sadly enough, but the hand with the heart in it; not simply our silver and gold, but the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ mediated through the graciousness of a genuine Christian sympathy. It is this that counts most with men here, and it is this, I am persuaded, that shall count most with God hereafter. I heard of a poem the other day which I wish I could repeat to you entire. But I can tell you its story only. It is called "The Red Top," and it runs thus: A certain soul had departed the body, but he hovered

long enough over his former abode to attend his own funeral. And he heard with infinite satisfaction the eulogy pronounced on that occasion. The eulogy was one long catalogue of mighty beneficences and widespreading charities. At last, fat with the praises of earth, the soul took his departure confidently for the realms of bliss. At the gate he was met with the challenge of the porter, "Who are you that seek entrance here among the saints?" And the answer came with assurance, "I am So-and-so," — a name that was an open-sesame to all the doors of earth. But the answer came, "We know you not here." "What," cried the astonished soul, swollen with indignation, "not know *me?* Why, I builded such and such libraries and founded such and such churches and hospitals, and supported such and such philanthropic and religious missions." Still came the calm, sad answer, "We know you not here." And the soul stepped aside in sulky silence. And then there came limping toward the gate a little lame lad, clad in rags. And to him the porter opened with a smile of welcome. But the lad turned wistfully toward the excluded soul, and said pleadingly, "Won't you let him, too, come in with me?" And the answer came, "Why should I?" And even the soul asked, "Why do you ask for me? When did you ever know me?" And the little soul answered, "Once I was looking into a toy-shop window. And you came by and asked, 'What do you want, my little lad?' And I said, 'The red top

in the window.' And you took me by the hand and led me in and bought it for me. And then you sat down with me by the curbstone and taught me how to spin it." And then the gates of heaven flew open wide, and the porter said to the soul that was no longer proud, "Come in; not because of your hospitals and libraries and churches, but because of the little red top."

And so, when we get over yonder, we shall find remembered to our credit, not the beneficences which the world belauds with loudest voice, the things to which we gave our "silver and our gold," but the little forgotten kindnesses, thoughtfulnesses, and sympathies, through which we gave ourselves to our fellows, — the graciousness wherein through us the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ did touch our brother-men.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EXTENDED HAND

Ecclesiastes iv. 10 b. "Woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up."

SOMETIMES there is great strength to be found in solitude, especially when it is voluntary and when it is deliberately chosen for a spiritual purpose. There come times in every earnest life when the man feels that he must strip off all the superficial distractions and absorptions of everyday existence and let his naked soul come into immediate touch with the besetting Spirit of God. There are hours, for instance, when some great decision must be made, when the man must put forth his hand to hush all the noises of the world, even the dear voices of friends, and, above all, the voice of self, that in the solemn stillness he may listen to what God has to say to him. Perhaps in our modern religious life, which so largely expresses itself in noisy, bustling activity, there is great need for emphasis upon the value of such voluntary and deliberate solitude now and then.

But there is another side to the picture. There is a great weakness in solitude when it is involuntary, the solitude of desertion and indifference on the part of one's fellows and the consequent despair of one's

self. When a man can say with the psalmist, "I looked on my right hand and there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul," he is indeed in perilous state; unless he can add those other noble words that immediately follow, "I cried unto Thee, O Lord, and I said, 'Thou art my refuge.'"

There is immense moral strength in social life of the right sort; how much we never know until we are deprived of it. There is a higher and a lower aspect to this moral strength of social life.

In the first place, we owe a great debt to the conventions, the customs, the habits of respectable society by which we are surrounded. Each individual life is propped and guyed on every side by a thousand unseen, intangible but powerful influences which hold it more or less straight and true. The opinion of our class, the common standards of our circle, the regard for reputation, the esteem of our friends and companions, are some of these guys and stays. They do incalculably much to keep us upright. Cut them all away in any instance, and, unless his character is based on some deeper foundation of principle and faith in God, the man is very likely to fall. And if society does not in some way extend to him a friendly hand, he is very apt to stay fallen.

But, as I have said, there is also a higher aspect to this moral strength of the social life. The touch of God often falls on us most sensibly in the right human touch. We feel the hand of God in the

friendly grasp of some true and loving human hand. There is an extension of the Incarnation in very sooth. But it is not wholly or even chiefly where some ecclesiastics have sought it, in material sacraments, but in sacramental lives; God-full lives; souls in whom Christ dwells so richly that you feel Him in all their issues of word and deed and unconscious influence. And it is the contact with such lives that often gives the otherwise lonely struggler strength to stand in the hour of temptation when "the blast of the terrible ones is as the storm against the wall." And it is the touch of such lives, also, that often gives a man moral resiliency, the will and the power to get up again and go on with the fight when he has once fallen. For God still reveals Himself to us chiefly through godly, God-like men. The "word is still made flesh and dwells among us." A workingman once said of Phillips Brooks, "When I see that man, it is easy to believe in God."

And so it comes to pass that abandonment by society is often practically equivalent to abandonment by God. It is that which thrusts many a lonely soul into "wretchlessness of most unclean living." There are millions in our midst to-day who feel the terrible reality of these words, "Woe unto him who is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." I believe that these words hold at their heart the secret of at least nine-tenths of the criminality which exists among us and which shocks our sensitive souls.

Crime is not natural or necessary to humanity. We recognize that fact when we call it now "inhuman" and now "unnatural." The born criminal, the morally degenerate, is comparatively rare. And when he is found, he ought to be treated as we do the insane and epileptic, in some medical institution or asylum. The jail, or the penitentiary, the ordinary penal establishment, furnishes no cure for that evil, but often only an aggravation of it. Our best thought to-day is slowly awakening to that fact. The great morass of crime in which so many welter is due to economic and consequent social conditions. We who have always been comfortable, and always have been woven fast into a perfect warp and woof of sustaining influences and high, clean living, — we cannot begin to appreciate the moral destitution and loneliness of, perhaps, the majority of human lives about us.

Did you ever stop to think why the slums of our cities are the natural haunts of crime — why it flourishes there as nowhere else? We have a short and easy way of accounting for it, a way that is very quieting and comforting to our own consciences. We say, "Poverty is the natural consequence of crime, as comfort and wealth are of virtue." Ah, my friends, I think that we have for the most part simply gotten the cart before the horse. Poverty is a far more common and fruitful cause of crime than crime is of poverty.

"The destruction of the poor is his poverty," says

the wise old book of Proverbs. And it is by no means the material destitution of poverty, awful as that is among us, which is the most efficient cause. It is the social meagreness, the social solitude, — if I may use a self-contradictory expression, — and the consequent moral destitution which constitute the most appalling and damning fact in poverty.

When poverty comes in its extreme forms, what happens? First the man or the family is driven out of the pale of respectability into the purlieus of vice. For respectability and vice have their geographical boundaries in our modern city. Respectability lives on the avenues and the comfortable side-streets that branch off therefrom. Vice dwells in the crowded tenement of the slums. All the institutions that stand for the higher, better life — schools, churches, parks, and the like — crowd into the first area, and, except for the occasional oasis of a social settlement or a forlorn mission chapel or a contracted playground, the region of poverty is left a social and moral desert. And then the man loses touch with his old circle of acquaintance and friends. The isolation is almost as great as if he had moved across the seas to a foreign land. Life in his new abode is for the most part a scramble for mere existence. There is no time, no mind, no opportunity, for anything higher. Everybody about him is absorbed in the same physical and material struggle. There is nothing to modify it. He cannot find sympathy with any higher thought or aspiration. "He looks on

his right hand and there is no man that knoweth him; human refuge faileth him; no man careth for his soul," for here few men care for their *own* souls. What wonder if, out of such an experience, there come gradually, inevitably, the abandonment of moral despair and the "wretchlessness of most unclean living"? There is little to lift one above the animal.

Our civilization, the society in which we live, is Janus-faced. It beams with smiling, benignant countenance upon the comfortable and the respectable. And we sing its praises. Why should we not? It means to us law and order, peace and security, protection and sustenance, all that makes life comfortable, easy, happy, liveable. But it has another face, a very stern and terrible face. It looks habitually with grim visage and wrathful frown upon the socially outcast and morally destitute, the weak and the ignorant. To them it is the natural enemy, not the great beneficent power of public order. It touches them rarely with friendly hand, but mostly with the policeman's club.

Read such books as Robert Hunter's "Poverty" or "The Confessions of a Thief," if you would know the genesis and natural history of most of our ordinary crime. Let me give you a few quite common examples — so common as to be commonplace.

A boy is driven out of a crowded tenement room by a drunken father or an overwrought and scolding mother. Caught wandering on the streets, he is

driven back into the tenement by the policeman with his club. After they have thus played battledore and shuttlecock with him for a while, he joins the gang in the back alleys or on the dump; for he has no other friends, and he must have society. Together they commit some minor offence or depredation. He is arrested, perhaps shut up in the common jail with criminals and prostitutes, where he may learn the art of sin from its adepts. He is haled before the police court, that wholesale manufactory of criminals (for I do believe that the ordinary police court makes more crime than it cures), railroaded through to the workhouse, and thereby branded forever. Now he is known to the police. He has a record. Society has knocked him down, but it does not offer to lift him up. On the slightest provocation it will knock him down again. The result is, a criminal has been made, and society has made him. Society is responsible.

A man is out of work. Perhaps he has been seeking a job till he is in despair, on the verge of suicide. He is arrested for vagrancy because he has no visible means of support; for poverty is made a crime in our present system of law; or worse, he is jailed on the vague general charge of suspicion. He is run into the workhouse, branded, and turned out with empty hands to go through the same experience again. He, too, has a record. He has been arrested. And the police watch for him. He has no friends, and therefore he gets scant justice. He

becomes an enemy of society because society has proved itself only an enemy to him. Another criminal is made, and society has made him.

A girl is suddenly thrown on her own resources. She seeks and perhaps finds a job. But the pay is miserably insufficient. The average wage of women workers in the cities of Ohio is something like $4.83 a week; the average living expense over $5.24. The conclusion is obvious. She cannot live by her work. Another alternative suggests itself with fatal facility. She takes it. Forthwith society becomes her fierce and relentless enemy. She becomes a moral leper. Her Christian sisters draw aside their skirts with loathing when they pass her on the streets, lest they be defiled by mere contact. Except in a very occasional and spasmodic way, the Christian Church does nothing for her. The Priest and the Levite still "pass by on the other side." She is left utterly alone in the wilderness of temptation with the wild beasts of men's lusts. Few and far between are the angels that minister unto her. And as for the State, the municipality, it touches her only with the policeman's club. Periodic raids are made upon her abodes for the purpose of private graft or public revenue. Fines are imposed which she can work out only by sinking deeper in infamy, until at last she drops into the final abyss. It is claimed by our wise sociologists that she is the necessary sacrifice which humanity must pay to its own brute nature, the whole burnt offering that must be made

upon the altar of shame. Yet society has invented no method of treating her except the old savage method of vindictive punishment that does not even pretend to a hope or offer an opportunity of reform. "Woe to the fallen woman, for she, beyond all others, falleth alone and there is not another to help her up."

So on every side "the destruction of the poor is his poverty." It is his social and moral destitution which are the consequence of, and yet far exceed, his material want; his solitariness and loneliness, his lack of all the uplifting and inspiring influences in which our lives are so rich, — it is these which are his ruin. It is these which are producing criminals wholesale among us.

What is the remedy? Well, undoubtedly there has got to be some day, sooner or later, a new and radical economic adjustment. At the present time, wealth, which is always the product of labor either of hand or brain, is largely congested in the coffers of a few; and they often are the idlers rather than the toilers of society, the parasites rather than the producers. Opportunity also is almost wholly monopolized by the privileged few. It is theirs exclusively. The very chance to make an existence depends largely on their good-will. Wealth must somehow be more equitably distributed. Special privilege must be abolished, and, above all, opportunity, the chance to make a comfortable living, must be thrown open to all who will avail themselves of it. That economic readjustment must come, or else modern

civilization will go to pieces as every civilization before it has. To try to blink or deny the existence of that great necessity which looms on our social horizon, is as foolish as to hide our heads in the sand with the ostrich, and so imagine that we escape the notice of our relentless pursuer.

But before all that and with all that and after all that, something else can be done and must be done, and, thank God, is being done, in ever increasing measure as the years go by. If we cannot at once deal effectively with the material destitution of poverty, we can deal, and are dealing, with its social and moral destitution. We can surround and fill the despairing loneliness of the social outcast with friendliness, sympathy, and helpfulness; we can walk with him his hard and perilous road. And when he falls, we can hold out a hand and lift him up and set him on his feet again. The symbol of the new philanthropy is the extended hand. But that new philanthropy is but the old Christianity of Christ; so old that it once seemed likely to become obsolete. But there has come of late years, thank God, a new revival of it.

What was the method of Jesus in His dealing with the social and moral outcast? It was extremely simple, so simple that in our search for more complicated methods we have often completely overlooked it. It was simply friendliness in all that the great word implies. He was familiarly and sometimes contemptuously called "the friend of the publicans

and sinners," even of the harlots of the streets of Jerusalem. The power of redemption with which He touched fallen humanity was the power of an infinite Divine love; but that love was ever mediated in simple human friendliness. Who can measure what the friendliness of Jesus meant to many a despairing soul, many a branded outcast of Church and State, from the rich publican of Jericho to the poor woman of the town who crept into the wealthy Pharisee's feast and bathed the Master's feet with her tears. The extended hand,—I see it everywhere in the Gospel story. By it the Master wrought all His miracles of physical and moral healing. With it He touched the leper and made him clean. With it He lifted up the lame and made him whole. With it He touched the eyes of the blind, and they were opened. But all this seems to me no more wonderful or Divine than that with the same extended hand He took Zacchæus by his hand and said simply, "I am going home to dinner with you," and thereby transfigured the man's whole spirit and transformed his life; or that with outstretched hand He forgave and blessed the penitent Magdalene and thereby cast out all her devils of lust, passion, and despair.

Ah, Jesus' Gospel of friendliness, the great infinite Divine love touching each lonely and despairing soul of man, through the outstretched hand of human sympathy and helpfulness, how utterly simple it is, and yet how all but omnipotently powerful and effective. Believe me, it will do more to-day for the

salvation of a lost humanity than all the creeds, dogmas, rituals, and sacraments the world has ever known. That is the Gospel that needs above all others to be preached and practised in these days. And, thank God, it is being preached and practised more and more every year. The Social Settlement is doing it in the slums. Even the State and the municipality are beginning to do it in our civic life. The juvenile court with its official fathers and mothers, and the boys' farm and reform school, are substituting the friendly, guiding hand for the policeman's club in dealing with the young and wayward. The reorganization of our workhouses and other penal institutions, making them no longer solely or even chiefly penal, but more and more largely reformatory, is a move in the same direction, and every Christian man ought to give to that work his most earnest and enthusiastic sympathy and support, regardless of party politics. For it is not political. There is no politics in it. It is simply justice and righteousness; it is simply humanity and Christianity practically applied where it is most needed. I hope to see the day when even the police forces of our great cities shall no longer be merely negative in their functions, shall represent no longer only the heavy hand of the State stretched forth to restrain and punish, but also the friendly hand of the State stretched forth to help; when, for example, they shall not simply arrest the jobless man as a vagrant because he has no visible means of support,

but perhaps point him to some open public portal of opportunity, where he may find the means of self-support and of self-respect; or when again they shall not simply raid and arrest and fine the helpless fallen women of the town, but lead the penitent to some home of refuge and healing which shall be to them a valley of Achor and a way of hope. The modern State and municipality are surely moving in that direction. God speed the day of consummation. It shall be the day of the prophet's vision when "Holiness unto the Lord shall be written on the very bells of the cart horses" in the city of God, "the New Jerusalem that cometh down out of heaven to take possession of the earth."

So private philanthropy and public administration are slowly but surely learning to preach and to practise Christ's great simple Gospel of friendliness. But how is it with the Church of Christ? Ah, sometimes I fear that she lags somewhat behind in this forward march of the world under the leadership and inspiration of her Master. She does not yet touch with the tips of her fingers those loneliest and most hopeless of the world's outcasts — the vagrant, the tramp, and the prostitute. She does far too little as yet for the submerged tenth in the slums of our great cities, and that little often ineffectively. She is far too apt to drain off from the common world the respectable and well-to-do, and isolate them in little self-satisfied exclusive ecclesiastical clubs on the avenues and think that thus and then her work is

done. My friends, then and thus her work is not even begun; for that never was and never can be Christ's work. He was the *friend* of publicans and sinners. And until that title can also be applied in all honesty and reality to the Church, she is not really Christ's Church or doing Christ's work.

What shall the Church do and be? I have my vision of the ideal Cathedral Church. It shall be a great free Church, a Church of and for the people, all the people, where every wayfarer shall find welcome, not by the chance graciousness of some hospitable pew-holder, but because the House of God is the rightful home of all His children; where the Gospel of the righteousness of God and the love of Christ shall be preached both fearlessly and tenderly to rich and poor alike; about which shall cluster homes of beneficence and healing, and from which shall go forth personal ministries of mercy and blessing whereby this Church of Christ, like her Master, shall stretch forth hands of friendliness and sympathy and helpfulness to all who need, to all who are lonely and oppressed throughout this great city. That is my vision of the ideal Cathedral. May God bring about its realization.

One word more. The grace of friendliness is primarily a *personal* grace. The power of friendliness is the chief talent which the Master intrusts to every Christian disciple and for whose use he must render account at the last. How is it with your friendships, my Christian brother or sister? Are they all selfish,

mere friendships of congruity, delightful companionships with those of like tastes and affinities, from whom you get fully as much as you give to them? Or do you at least as much as now and then seek out some isolated and perhaps superficially uncongenial soul, — some soul that really needs human sympathy to save it from moral despair, — and warm that soul into fuller life with your friendliness? Do you ever walk the lonely path with the solitary and stretch out the hand to lift the fallen? Ah, if every Christian family would get into some such relation with one family among the socially and morally destitute, and if every Christian man and woman would so touch with simple Christian sympathy one discouraged heart, the problem of the unreached, the deficient, the fallen, would be largely solved. We should see the moral miracles of Jesus and His Apostles wrought again before our eyes.

CHAPTER IX

AN AGNOSTIC APOSTLE

St. John xi. 16. "Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him.'"

St. John xiv. 5. "Thomas saith unto Him, 'Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?'"

St. John xx. 24–25. "But Thomas, one of the Twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said unto them, 'Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails and put my finger in the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.'"

THESE three texts, all taken from St. John's Gospel, suggest the three incidents which alone have been preserved to us out of the life of St. Thomas and his intercourse with the Master. These three incidents are all that we have from which to form our conception of the man. But like the few, bold lines of a good etching, they give us a very clear and definite portrait. They set before us a very natural, striking, and psychologically consistent character and, withal, a very noble, strong, and lovable one. Perhaps we can best understand Thomas by setting him over against his opposite in the Apostolic college. The one may serve as a foil to bring out distinctly the characteristics of the other.

"It takes all kinds of men to make a world," says an old and familiar adage. And as we may see from the varied and diverse composition of that little group of twelve men in whom the Christian Church started, it takes all kinds of men to make a church.

Faith, at least in its beginnings, is often largely a matter of temperament. It comes easy to some men, to those of sanguine temperament and emotional disposition, those in whom the heart easily leads the head. Such a man, plainly, was Simon Peter. His feelings were quickly kindled, and in their glow he saw truth readily. His perceptions were quick, his intuitions swift. So he jumped to his conclusions rather than climbed to them by the slow, toilsome, and halting processes of reason. And I say all this not by way of criticism or disparagement. For we are finding out more and more truly, in spite of all the overemphasis which the modern scientific spirit has put upon a one-sided use of our many-sided nature in the discovery of truth, however much it has overstressed the so-called "dry light" of reason, — we are finding out that in certain directions at least the feelings are a much better and surer guide into some kinds of truth than the intellect. It is especially so in all personal matters. You do not arrive at your faith in the love of your wife or of your mother or the trustworthiness of your friend by any lame and halting process of logic, by any mental analysis and

synthesis, argument or proof. Nay, logic has little or nothing to do with the matter. But in the power of feeling you leap to your conclusion. You see it in the glow of your emotions by immediate intuition. And you make no mistake about it. You are surer of that fact than of any you may reason out. You trust it and rely on it absolutely. The hypothesis of your science may fail you, but the love and trustworthiness of your loved ones stand firm. So it is, also, with our religious faith. For faith means primarily and essentially, not the accepting of dogmas, but trust in a Person, trust in Jesus Christ and in the God Whom He reveals.

Therefore it is that, as I have said, faith, in its beginnings at least, comes easy to the man of sanguine and emotional temperament like Peter. And it is the best kind of faith, too. As Jesus said to Thomas, "Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed, — because thou hast tested and proved, — but blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." And Peter was of that sort, the sort that believe though they cannot see, because they *feel* the truth. It was that temperament which enabled him in that hour of darkness at Cæsarea Philippi, when faith was failing on every side, when Jesus Himself anxiously probed the hearts of His very own with the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" to see what trust there was left in them, — it was that temperament which enabled Simon Peter in that hour to make the great confes-

sion, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." He had *felt* that faith out rather than reasoned it out. And in the enthusiasm of his conviction his spirit leaped and soared above all doubts and difficulties to the perfect vision.

Now it is such men, and such men alone, who are born to be leaders in all great spiritual or material enterprises, the undaunted enthusiasts who can do and dare in the power of ardent emotion and convictions, — it is such men alone who can make things go, who can carry things through all difficulty and opposition to ultimate success. Therefore it was that Jesus turned upon Peter, saying, "Thou art Peter, the Rock, and upon this rock will I build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." To that disposition and temper, to that enthusiastic faith of intuition and emotion, Jesus could trustfully commit the future of his spiritual enterprise, His Church and Kingdom; for in such hands it was sure to stand, ay, and to prevail. And so it turned out, Peter was the first founder and leader of the Church after Christ, because his disposition fitted him to be that. He preached the first sermon, baptized the first converts, directed the first counsels and plans of the infant Church. It is a singularly dead and blind literalism, by the way, that can wrest out of this enthusiastic utterance, with its obvious ground and fulfilment, any forecast of the ecclesiastical primacy of Peter and his so-called successors, the Popes of Rome.

But such a disposition has also its natural infirmities, "the defects of its virtues," as the French phrase it, the weaknesses of its strength. If it can trust and do and dare under the stress of emotion, the glow of enthusiasm, it is very apt also to faint and fail when the storm of feeling passes away, as it is sure to pass away. It lacks steadfastness, endurance, the settled rock-foundations of abiding principle; the dogged, patient fortitude, which meets the dull and continuous demands of common experience; a less brilliant gift, perhaps, but more necessary than the spasmodic courage which rises to meet the great occasion. And here Peter was notoriously lacking. He could stand forth and make the great confession in his hour of enthusiasm at Cæsarea: but in the hour of danger, at the question of a servant-girl, he cowered and denied his Master. He could stand up boldly at Jerusalem under the spell of Paul and Barnabas's eloquent recital of their labors and achievements among the Gentiles, and champion the cause of enlightened spiritual liberty and a catholic Gospel, but he showed the white feather on the very same matter a little later at Antioch under the suspicious eyes and whispered comments of some Jewish critics.

Such was Simon Peter, the ardent man of emotional faith, capable of rising at spurts to great occasions, but lacking in steady, plodding, dogged endurance.

Now in contrast to this at every point stands out the character of Thomas. Faith came very hard to

Thomas. It was exceedingly difficult for him to believe in anything beyond the tests of his senses. He was of a phlegmatic rather than a sanguine disposition. His feelings were profound when once aroused, but they were not easily aroused. He was not of an emotional temperament. The head with him always led the heart, and not the heart the head. He had to think things out: he could not feel them out. He had to follow his reason, for his intuitions were slow and uncertain. Consequently he could take nothing on authority, or on the testimony of others. He must see, test, and prove for himself. So, when the other disciples, after the resurrection, with the awe and the joy of their recent vision in their eyes, came to him, saying, "We have seen the Lord," Thomas could only shake his head and say, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails and put my finger in the print of the nails and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe," and he might have added, "because I cannot believe in any other way." We can see what was passing in his mind as he said those words. "These emotional, enthusiastic fellows, who let their hearts run away with their heads, particularly this unballasted, unbalanced, illogical Peter, who is always being swept away on freshets of mere feeling, these children of sentiment, — out of the grieving love of their human hearts they have conjured up some imaginary vision of the Dearly Beloved. And the reason why the vision has not appeared to me is because I am

not emotional and imaginative. In the dry light of reason such visions must fade out into thin air." That is the way Thomas must have meditated with himself. We are familiar with the language of to-day. It is just the way the cool, hard-headed, materialistic, and literalistic man of common sense habitually thinks and occasionally talks about the man of faith.

Again, take that other occasion when Jesus, on the eve of His death and departure, is discoursing to His disciples about "the Father's house of many mansions whither He goes to prepare a place for them," and on that ground He exhorts them to faith and confidence. Jesus is soaring among the high mysteries, on the wings of ecstatic vision. And He could trust some of the disciples to follow Him at least to some degree, for they had some intuition and spiritual conception. Therefore He cried, "Whither I go ye know and the way ye know." But poor literalistic, materialistic Thomas had no wings. He could not follow any of these lofty flights among the mysteries. He could only stumble about drearily among the clods and dust of the earth. All this high discourse meant to him only that the Master, the Master of his heart as much as of any, perhaps as we shall see presently, more than of most of the others, — the Master of his heart was to be torn from him. He knew nothing beyond that, for he could see no farther than that. And so to Jesus' appeal to intuition and faith,

"Whither I go ye know and the way ye know," Thomas could only answer with a blunt, flat, and almost fretful contradiction, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest and how can we know the way?" It is an utterance that has about it much of the weariness, the impatience, which the literalistic, practical man displays toward the incomprehensible sayings of the mystic and seer. It seems to say under the breath, "What incomprehensible talk, what stuff and nonsense, is this?" Only here it is mellowed and saved from such a tone by the yearning and desperate love that breathes through it. All Thomas knew was that His Master was to be taken away from his heart that day. Beyond that all was blank ignorance and despair. "A Father's house with many mansions" somewhere in the great invisible beyond, where Jesus was going and where they should meet him some day — what dream stuff was this? No one had ever gone there and come back. No one had ever seen it. And as for what Thomas could not see, — it might be so, of course, but he could not believe. And so he gives utterance somewhat impatiently, but withal with a desperate sadness, to the first expression of agnosticism on record, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest and how can we know the way?" There is the whole philosophy as neatly and compactly stated as it could possibly be. And so we see that agnosticism is not so fresh and modern a thing as we have commonly thought it. It had its

representative in the Apostolic college in which the Church of Jesus Christ began. There was an agnostic Apostle among the Twelve.

And how gently and tenderly Jesus Christ dealt with His blind, impatient, despairing disciple. We can see Him turning to him with a smile, a kindly, tender smile upon His lips as He says, "Thomas, I am the way and the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." It was an answer particularly and personally adapted to Thomas. It said to him, "If you cannot grapple with the abstract mysteries of the faith, if you cannot rise to the high plane of vision, you can believe in the personal and living Master."

And in that personal faith and trust the germ of all the rest is contained. "Only believe in and rest implicitly on Me, and you will find all the rest in due time. For *I am* all the rest. I am the way, the truth, and the life." That was the meaning of this answer. For the poor blind, materialistic, unimaginative, practical man who could get no hold on the unseen and eternal, it substituted the warm and living grasp of the warm and living personality. And so much Thomas could understand and realize. For if he was not a man of faith, he was preëminently a man of love. Not the merely emotional love that exhausts itself in sentiment. No, there was little or no sentiment, or emotion, for that matter, about Thomas. But with him love was a profound, abiding principle of loyalty, of absolute devotion.

He could not understand all Jesus' sayings. Probably he could understand very few of them, and very little about those few. They were so mystical, so beyond the reach of the mere intellect. But Thomas could love Him, and did love Him, with an absolute devotion. We can see that in all these instances. That bald, flat contradiction, which sounds so impatient and resentful in our ears, so like flinging back the Master's words into His teeth in fretful imitation, — it is but the sob of a broken heart, beating itself against the incomprehensible mystery of its approaching bereavement. Probably Thomas felt that bereavement more than any of the rest, because, with his dulness of spiritual sight, he could see no light behind it, while the others got at least some faint glimpse into the other side. That is why he cried out so desperately, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest and how can we know the way?" It is the protest, the irrepressible protest, of a broken heart against a consolation it cannot understand and which therefore only mocks its grief. There is nothing in the Scriptures more touching to me than this cry of Thomas's or the Master's gentle, kindly response by which He turns His poor disciple's thought and attention away from all incomprehensible mysteries of His words and fastens them again upon His own Person.

And again, take that other incident. It shows us how that love without faith gave Thomas a grim, despairing courage more noble and more steadfast

than the dash and dare of passing enthusiasm. Jesus had been in retirement across the Jordan, because an attempt had recently been made upon His life in Jerusalem. But now a call of duty summons Him back to the scene of His recent peril. His friend Lazarus is dead, and the bereaved sisters need Him. And He turns His face steadfastly to go where duty calls Him, with some mystical words of encouragement to His disciples. He "cannot stumble while it is yet day." That is, He cannot meet death until the time appointed by His Father had come. Thomas probably did not take much stock in the mystical utterance, because he could not understand it. He knew not whether there was a Divine plan behind Jesus' life and all other lives, or not. Whether there was a Providence over all, so that there was an appointed time for everything, a set hour for all that happened, a purpose of God into which everything fitted, he knew not. These were mysteries above his comprehension. He could only affirm his ignorance, his agnosticism, about them. So these words of consolation made no appeal to him. If he went with Jesus, it could not be in the courage set up by the hope of some mystical security such as Jesus held forth to the others in this strange language. No, for his part he must look at it and judge it as a plain, practical man of common sense. And looking at the situation that way, he saw nothing ahead but the most imminent peril, and probably a violent death, if they ventured

back into Jerusalem now. But what of that? One thing he knew, he loved the Master too much to let Him go alone into that peril. Ay, he loved this Master too much to be content to go on living at all without Him. He had rather die with Him than live without Him. And so he says calmly but desperately to his fellow-disciples, "Let us go also that we may die with Him." Those words seem to say, "This looks to me like the rash, foolish, fatal venture of a dreamer, an enthusiast, moved by some incomprehensible reasons. No practical man of common sense would undertake so wild a risk. I cannot understand His grounds for doing it, nor His mystical sense of security. But nevertheless, I must go with Him and share His fate, for I cannot live without Him." There is something inexpressibly fine and noble about this utterance and attitude of Thomas, the man without faith or hope, but with a sturdy, strong, and absolutely devoted and unhesitating love.

And so the Apostolic college was large enough and comprehensive enough to hold both these men — Peter the impulsive, sanguine man of large emotional faith, and Thomas the practical, matter-of-fact man, deficient in the faith-faculty, but with capacity for loyalty and heroic devotion. And if the Apostolic college was big enough for that, surely the Apostolic Church in all ages should be big enough for that. If Jesus could tolerate and cherish among His dearest friends and among the highest officers

of His Kingdom an agnostic Apostle, surely the Church can afford to keep in the hospitality of her fold to-day the earnest — indeed, devoted — men who love Jesus and all He stands for, but may not yet be able to say any creed, even the simplest. Let her put her men of vision and of faith to the forefront to be her leaders and guides, as they alone can be, to direct her counsels, as they alone can; but let her keep some place, too, for the men without positive faith, it may be, but with steadfast and faithful love of all that is right, and true, and loyal to the Christian ideals and the real Christ.

There are many such on the border-land of the Kingdom. But at present the Church is apt to shut them out by dogmatic requirements which they are too honest to comply with, though they may long for her spiritual fellowship and sympathy. When I read the life of Mr. Huxley, for example, it seems to me a shame that the Church should have lost the intense moral earnestness and power of a man so absolutely true and upright; and that he, for his part, should have lost the fellowship and sympathy of the one great organization set up on earth for the realization of the ideal life. For after all, what is the Church? It is not a post-graduate school for those who are proficient in either Christian life or Christian faith. But it is simply a school for the ignorant, a hospital for the feeble. And that means the feeble in faith as well as the feeble in will. If any man have the rudiments of a faith-

capacity in him, — if simply he turn his face toward Christ in reverence and earnest desire, — then the Church should have some place for that man where she could nourish and develop his feeble beginnings of faith into their perfect flower, even as Jesus did for Thomas, the agnostic Apostle.

The Church of the New Testament seems to have done that. At any rate, there is no evidence anywhere of any dogmatic or doctrinal test for admission, any dogmatic or doctrinal fence of exclusion about it. There are evidences that there were people in it who questioned and doubted almost every article of our present Christian creed, and yet who were not therefore expelled or excommunicated, but lovingly dealt with, encouraged, and instructed, until they should come to a more perfect faith. It was only for heinous moral crime or offence that they were excommunicated. For example, there were plainly in the Corinthian Church men who denied the resurrection of Jesus and the hope of the Christian's resurrection and the life everlasting. They explained it all away as symbolism or allegory. And yet St. Paul does not for an instant think of instituting a heresy trial and having them put out of the Church for this. He simply writes them a letter in which he reasons with them and instructs them. But when a certain man commits a heinous offence against public morals, he bids the brethren formally suspend him for a season, until he shall show signs of repentance. That was the spirit of

the Church of the New Testament, and that should be the spirit of the Church to-day. But the mind of the Church to-day often seems to be just the opposite of this. We render fulsome adulation to certain men of high position and great wealth, though they be notoriously guilty of flagrant sin against justice and equity and common honesty, because they rent our finest pews and give fat subscriptions for charities, while we depose from the ministry the faithful prophet and clear-sighted seer who may put a different accent on some shibboleth of the faith, or differ slightly from us in the metaphysical interpretation of some mystery which nobody can ever comprehend.

There ought to be a welcome at the Lord's Table for all who in sincerity and faith love the Christian ideal as realized in Jesus Christ, whatever be their present doctrinal opinions. The invitation ought to be always left as broad and simple as the Church herself makes it in her exhortation, "Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins and are in love and charity with your neighbors and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in His holy ways, draw near with faith and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort."

A good, faithful woman of my acquaintance had once gotten lost in the mists and quagmires of intellectual doubt, so that she had slipped her hold on the old definite beliefs of her childhood, but never

for an instant had she lost her love of Christ and all that Christ stood for. She was giving herself to noble and unselfish service, but without the strength and comfort of a positive faith. She went for advice to a great and noble Christian scholar. She asked, "What shall I do about coming to the Lord's Table? I want to come. It gives me comfort and strength to come. It knits me closer to all the good people who are striving after the Christian ideal. But I do not believe exactly as the most of them profess to believe. Indeed, I do not know exactly what I do believe. What shall I do?" The great scholar and wise shepherd of souls answered simply, "If you can believe that love, especially love in self-sacrifice, the love that gives itself to the utmost, love like the love of the cross, — if you can believe that such love is the highest, Divinest thing in this universe, and therefore if there be a God, that this would be His way of revealing and manifesting Himself to His children, then come by all means to the Holy Table." That, it seems to me, is the very spirit of Christ. That is the spirit in which He welcomed Thomas into the blessed company of the Apostles and kept him there until his honest doubt ripened into enthusiastic faith. And that is the spirit in which He would welcome to-day into His fellowship any who, like Thomas, loved the right, the true, and were loyal to the Christian ideal, however befogged about Christian doctrine they might be.

And I would say to every such man or woman:

claim and use all the privileges of the Christian Church that you conscientiously can; make yourself at home in its broad and generous hospitality; find all the spiritual fellowship and sympathy you can in it. And it may be that living thus, the mists will rise from your soul until at last the vision of the perfect faith is yours, and you too fall down at Jesus' feet, saying, "My Lord and my God."

CHAPTER X

THE CONFIDENCE OF A CERTAIN FAITH

St. John ix. 25. "One thing I know."

You recall the setting of this utterance. It is the story of the man born blind whose eyes were opened by Jesus at the pool of Siloam. As soon as he appears strong and seeing upon the familiar streets where once he sat a blind beggar, he is set upon by the Scribes and Pharisees. They are bent upon invalidating his testimony to Jesus among the people and even upon destroying, if possible, his own incipient faith. Therefore they belabor him with arguments and beset him with sophistries. Patiently he listens to all they have to say, and cleverly he answers them. But it is all to no purpose. They are blind and deaf with prejudice. At last through all the confusion of the controversy there rings this one sturdy cry, "Whether this man be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." With that utterance he closes the discussion. It is a cry of assurance, of certainty; it is as when a man who has long been struggling in a bottomless morass finally finds solid ground under his feet, or when a desperate fighter, hard beset upon every side,

at last reaches some great rock against which he may set his back and face his foes. It is the appeal to experience; and experience is ever an irrefutable argument. From that ground one can never be moved so long as he trusts the testimony of his own consciousness.

To that attitude of mind and heart in this sturdy witness came the full revelation. "When Jesus heard that they (the Scribes and Pharisees) had cast him out, He came unto him and said, 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?' and he answered and said, 'Who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him?' and Jesus said, 'Thou hast both seen Him and it is He that talketh with thee.' And he said, 'Lord, I believe,' and worshipped Him." So did this simple man, starting from that one solid basis of all conviction and assurance, — experience, — arrive finally at the fulness of faith.

The religious world of to-day is an arena of strife. It resounds with the clamor of controversy. The earnest believer finds himself ringed round with adversaries and beset with arguments that would shake and even undermine his faith. How shall we lead the plain man, the simple-minded disciple, to a firm ground on which he may plant his feet and stand sure, — a rock against which he may set his back and face his foes? How shall we develop in him "the confidence of a certain faith"?

The old bases of authority on which believers

once rested with complete assurance are practically gone. The old guides which men once followed with implicit and unquestioning trust have failed. We must face that fact squarely. An inerrant Bible, whose very words were all equally and alike the words of God, and an infallible Church, whose creeds, dogmas, and decrees were the immediate inspiration of the Spirit, promised to lead us into all truth, — these have become impossible of acceptance by the average intelligent modern man, who faces the facts and deals honestly with them and with himself. Modern biblical criticism, modern historical research, modern philosophy and science, the whole sum of modern knowledge and the whole temper of the modern mind, have made them impossible.

The consequence is that multitudes, both of the masses of the common people and also of the educated and cultured classes, have practically deserted the Church and religion itself. They say to us — the accredited teachers of religion and representatives of the Church: "The region where you dwell is to us a quagmire, a bottomless morass, which offers not so much as a hummock of solid ground on which we may stand sure and firm. It is overhung everywhere with the mists of uncertainty. We cannot see our way. To us the region of religion is necessarily the realm of agnosticism. But here on the uplands of science, whither modern research has led us, we feel everywhere the solid

rock of certainty under our feet. The atmosphere is clear; we have the light of assured knowledge, of verified fact. We have experience as a trustworthy guide. Here we must dwell and live. Along this table-land of scientific certitude we must make our life journey and leave you, if you so choose, to your morass and your fogs."

Some are saying this flippantly and blatantly — others sadly and despairingly. But underneath all the prevalent scepticism and agnosticism of the day, even underneath its most flippant and blatant forms, there lies, I am sure, a heart hungry for the higher spiritual realities. For man is incurably religious. The prayer goes up secretly or openly from many a longing soul: "Oh send out Thy light and Thy truth that they may lead me and bring me to Thy holy hill and to Thy dwelling."

Have we any answer to give to that pathetic prayer of the multitudes, who "wander as sheep without a shepherd," that real longing for "the confidence of a certain faith"? It is peculiarly the task of those who represent the more liberal thought of the Church to-day to point the way to such a faith; and I believe we can point the way. But the answer to this great need lies not where we very commonly look for it — merely in a New Theology, a new reasoned and scientific interpretation of our ancient dogmas and creeds brought into accordance with modern knowledge. That is an important work, and ought to be done.

It ought to be done carefully, thoroughly, wisely; and it is attempted, let me say, by many who are not competent for the task. But even if it were perfectly done, it would not yet meet the whole need. A New Theology, however rational and beautiful, will not finally and fully answer the soul's cry for "the confidence of a certain faith." The answer lies in a totally different region from that of the pure intellect.

The faith that is vital and real, the faith that counts and avails, the faith that is sure and unshakable, always strikes its first roots deep down into the soil of experience as did the faith of this simple man in the Gospel story; and the way into that experience is ever the way of life, and never the way of authority, scriptural or ecclesiastical, or of argument, philosophical or theological. Moral self-surrender and spiritual fellowship are its indispensable prerequisites. So Jesus declared again and again, "Whosoever will do the Will, shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself." And "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life."

The way is so plain that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." Yet so many of us do err therein and some never find the way — possibly just because we are not "fools." We are not simple-minded enough to discern it. We are too sophisticated with our subtleties and too befuddled with our philosophies. We scorn the

plain way of life and make to ourselves devious and complicated mazes wherein we wander until they lead us at last out into the wilderness of doubt and agnosticism. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes."

How simple and naïve, for example, is the story of the beginnings of the Christian faith, the genesis of the Christian Church as told in St. John's Gospel. A little group of simple-minded peasants and fishermen from Galilee gather about a great preacher in the wilderness, who speaks directly and mightily to the deepest needs of the human heart; he preaches straightly and practically of sin and repentance and the remission of sins. He then points them to One in their midst Who can meet those needs which he has served but to arouse, crying, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." They do not accept the words of the preacher blindly as infallible; they simply take them as testimony, and then proceed to put that testimony to the tests of experience; they "come and see"; they sojourn temporarily with this new rabbi, — for that was probably all He was to them at first. But they gradually come under the spell of His personality. They listen to him as He discourses, — never of dogmas and ceremonies, of authorities and precedents, of scriptural evidence or philosophical arguments; such things which form the bulk of our theological, religious, and apologetic discourses are

conspicuous by their absence in all Jesus' recorded utterances. Nay, He talks plainly but profoundly of the way of life; He reveals to them the Father as realized in His own consciousness, and He opens to them simple ways of access into this same communion and fellowship with God of which each may avail himself according to his several ability. They surrender themselves to His moral guidance and His spiritual discipline. And the more they make trial of Him in these practical ways of experience, the more He proves Himself to be to them. They had no clearly defined or adequate conception of His nature or His mission at first; probably they did not bother themselves much about it. They only knew that He was a master worth following, for He brought to all their needs peace and satisfaction and inspiration and strength. They go out to find their friends and companions and bring them to Him, and the one argument with which they meet all hesitation and doubt is simply this, "Come and see." Again and again is that challenge repeated. It means simply, "Come and try the method we have tried; the method of experience." He grows upon them into continually larger and fairer outlines. At last, after months and years of this self-surrender, of obedience, of discipline, of companionship, their faith grows too large for words to utter. They can only pick up the greatest terms current in the common religious language of their day, not to use as exact scientific or theological

definitions, but to fling out after a spiritual reality which is too vast for comprehension. "We have found Him of Whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write," says one. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," exclaims another. And another throws himself upon his knees before his Master, crying, "My Lord and my God."

By this way, then, all these men who "knew Christ after the flesh" arrived at the fulness of faith; namely, by the way of experience. So it was also with the greatest of the Apostles, the only one who never knew Him "after the flesh." Paul had only spiritual vision and spiritual experience, but it was that vision and experience which created and inspired his faith. It was because he found in the discipline of Christ and in fellowship with Christ that secret of pardon and peace and of a new life which he had been long seeking in vain in the law; it was because "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had set him free from the law of sin and death"; it was because Christ had "quickened him that had been dead in trespasses and sin, raised him up into the newness of life" and made him "sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," — it was because of all this that Paul believed. It was the practical and actual effect of the discipline and revelation of Christ and of fellowship with Christ upon moral and spiritual life which convinced the greatest mind Christianity has ever had, and turned Saul the persecutor into Paul the Apostle.

It was this vital faith of experience that sent these men out to the spiritual conquest of the world and made them invincible; it was this vital faith of experience that made them sure and confident in the face of all opposition; it was this that enabled them calmly to confront persecution and martyrdom. So it has been with saints of all ages; the great believers have ever been the men and women of profound experience. Their testimony is unvaried, "One thing I know; I know Him in Whom I have believed; I know what He hath done for my soul; I know how faith in Him hath quickened and inspired my life; I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation."

But man is a being that has a mind and intellect as well as a heart and soul, and his mind is curious and inquisitive; it must work incessantly upon the contents of consciousness; it insists upon analyzing and explaining every experience that comes to him. And therefore upon this abiding and permanent substance of the real, the actual, of experimental knowledge, it constructs its ever shifting and varying hypotheses of scientific, metaphysical, and philosophical speculation and interpretation. So it has been in the history of the Christian religion. *The* faith is ever the afterthought of faith.

Upon this basis, the Christ of experience, — which is the only sure and valid ground for a real and vital faith, — are erected the superstructures of theological and philosophical explanations, variegated

with the diverse hues of personality, of age and race and culture, all partial and necessarily transient in nature. So it was even among the Apostles. Thus we find it in their writings in the New Testament. Peter, the simple-minded, downright practical man he is, gives us little more than the plain testimony of his own experience. James casts his apprehension of the Master and His teachings into the familiar forms of the "wisdom literature" — homely moral apothegms and ethical proverbs and precepts, which reflect probably the childhood training of the home at Nazareth — the same material that is worked over into the surpassing parables and precepts of the synoptic gospels. Paul, true to his birth and training, sets forth his gospel in rabbinic and forensic dress. These are their scientific and theological interpretations of the one fundamental and essential Gospel and faith of experience. They are necessarily partial, variant, transient. The white light of the Gospel is broken up by the spectrum of personality into its component hues. The writers are evidently struggling to express, after their peculiar understandings, truth too great for any human utterance. As Matthew Arnold has said, — "Jesus is evidently so vastly greater than any of His witnesses or interpreters." They are like the clouds at eventide which reflect to us in brilliant colors the light of the hidden sun; beautiful as are their hues, we can only guess from them how much vaster and completer is the splen-

dor of their hidden source. So must we ever judge the New Testament. We must be free to test these interpretations and declare their occasional inadequacy and partialness. Here is the charter for all New Testament criticism. That criticism is a necessary note and characteristic of a large, reverent, and confident faith; it belongs to such a faith even more than to indifference or scepticism.

So it is also in the after history of the Church. The keen and subtle Greek mind with its intense metaphysical and analytical character plays upon this fundamental Gospel, this testimony of experience; it constructs the creeds which have become the inheritance of Catholic Christendom. But all creeds are only symbols; they are apprehensions after realities that are too great for comprehension. And therefore creeds are not fences to keep our straying feet within the narrow paddocks of approved orthodoxy; they are rather flags to follow. As such I rejoice in the historic creeds of our Catholic inheritance. I feel when I am saying them that I am joining in the great chorus of the saints of all ages in confessing our common trust in the One God and Father of us all, our common loyalty to the One Master, our common confidence in the One Guiding Spirit, and in expressing the *esprit de corps* of that great army of God, the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints. I feel like the knights of old who drew their swords at their recitation for a new conflict with the world, the flesh,

and the devil. I want no new creeds, particularly no modern creeds. This is not a creed-making age, and any creed we should manufacture to-day would be apt to be machine-made. It would not be a natural growth out of the heart's aspirations or the soul's experience. It would be too philosophical and too metaphysical, and not sufficiently factual and experimental. It would smell too much of theology, new or old.

But I cannot accept these creeds as exact scientific statements of spiritual truth. "Fixity of interpretation is *not* of the essence of the creeds," the American House of Bishops to the contrary notwithstanding. Fixity of interpretation would rather destroy the very value and function of all creeds. For example, the most violently orthodox believer who accepts the Copernican astronomy cannot take the article on the Descent into Hell or the Ascension into Heaven in the same sense in which the framers of these articles plainly meant them. If he claims such liberty for himself, he must in all reason allow others equal liberty to interpret other articles more in accordance with modern knowledge, and so possibly express a larger and fuller faith.

Yes, we must be free to criticise and reinterpret our creeds as we discern the larger Christ behind them. So it is still more with the scholastic theology of the Middle Ages and the Reformation. So it will be before long, also, with the New Theology of

to-day, the out-birth of our new knowledge and new philosophy. No theology is final or fixed. Underlying them all is the one essential basis, the Personal Christ and His teaching, as realized in the experience of the saints of all ages. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid." But upon that foundation the mind of the ages has built, and must always build, its variant superstructures, theologies, creeds, dogmas, some of "gold, silver, and precious stones; others of wood, hay, and stubble." "The fire of time shall try each such superstructure of what sort it is," but the foundation abideth. Often larger, clearer views of the essential truth come out of the destruction of the superimposed and obscuring theology. Often the earthquake of doubt and criticism brings down the long-venerated and accepted interpretation only to disclose more clearly the great Rock of Ages upon which it was built. For "that word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things which can be shaken that the things which cannot be shaken may abide." Astronomies shift and vary with the larger and deeper apprehensions of the ages, but the sun, moon, and stars shine on forever. Even so the theologies of men change, but "Jesus Christ abideth the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be,
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Now the great theological need of the age and of the Church to-day is to discriminate carefully between the fundamental and essential faith of experience and the ever varying scientific or theological interpretations of that faith, and to give to each its true value.

Unfortunately the Church often shows herself incapable of that discrimination and comparative valuation. In the first place, she very commonly reverses the natural order. She insists upon imposing an accepted scientific or theological interpretation of the truth before she leads her disciples into a vital and experimental knowledge of that truth. She puts the creeds before the Christ, the traditions of the elders before the discipline of the Master. And often those creeds and traditions serve but to hide the real Christ from the soul that needs Him, instead of leading the soul into that vision. Some one has aptly compared the all-too-common way of teaching religion to the process of etching upon glass. The surface of the glass is first covered with an impervious coating of wax; then the desired pattern is carefully etched with a sharp steel point; and then the glass is exposed to the sand-blast or the acid, which cuts only along the predetermined lines. So is the mind of the disciple covered with an impervious coat of blind prejudice, the pattern of the accepted creed is etched by the stilus of authority, and then only is the mind exposed to the testimony of experience.

I am not blindly decrying authority, either the authority of the Church or the authority of the Bible. Authority has its place — and that a very important and essential place — in the development of faith. But that authority must be rightly apprehended and rightly used. The authority which counts and avails in any region of life is, after all, the authority of a deep and wide experience of the facts. And so it is in the realm of religion; the authority which counts and avails there is not to be found in the decrees of infallible councils or the dogmas of inerrant scriptures. The real authority of the Church is the collective conscience and experience of "the communion of the saints," and the Bible is the record of that testimony of "the communion of the saints." But "the spiritual man judgeth all things," even the Bible and the Church. To be sure, he who in the conceit of his own narrow experience and meagre knowledge refuses to listen to the voices of sages and seers in any realm, is a conceited fool, and the ordinary heretic is likely to prove a mere crank and eccentric. Still, there arises a heretic every now and then who is simply a surpassing spiritual genius, and leads us into wider and profounder reaches of yet undiscovered truth. We cannot afford to miss such possibilities by restricting our liberties.

The relation of authority to the faith of experience may be illustrated from our educational processes. The old method of teaching a natural science was

this: A text-book was put into the hands of a pupil, and a teacher was set over him. And then the established hypotheses and theories of the day were duly driven and hammered into him, and he was bidden to hold them fast against all comers, shutting his eyes to all new light and his ears to all new discoveries or arguments. In the new method of education, the teacher and the text-book still have their places. We set before the scholar the best and most trustworthy testimony of experience that is available to date, and if he is wise, he will follow it. But he is bidden to take that testimony into the laboratory and test it by his own experience. And any new knowledge or interpretation which he derives therefrom are not forbidden, but gladly welcomed.

So it must be also in the realm of religion.

And in the second place, the Church has too often substituted the blind faith of tradition and authority for the vital faith of experience. As one has put it, "We have been guilty of the intellectual fallacy of making theology equivalent to religion instead of regarding it as a study of religion. It is as if one should declare biology to be identical with life, and make it the indispensable condition of being so much as born, to accept this or that preconceived theory of the science of life."

We must learn that religion comes a long way before theology, even as flowers come a long way before botany. One must first become acquainted

with flowers before he can to advantage take up botany. One must first become acquainted with religion through the vital experience of the spiritual life before he can do any good with theology. Theology can never lead into a vital faith; it simply analyzes and interprets a faith already established on another basis. To be sure, as long as man has an intellect, we must have both varieties of religion, — the religion of spiritual and moral experience and the religion of theological interpretation. As one has said, "As a matter of fact, he who accepts either kind of Christianity must accept both, and, for my own part, if one could have one without the other, I believe it to be the easier feat to accept the dogma and refuse the ethics; indeed, a proof of it is that this is what the greater part of the world really does." That is the prevalent and almost universal heresy of our orthodox religion. As last year's Bampton lecturer put it, it has been guilty of the intellectual fallacy of substituting theology for religion and the magical fallacy of substituting the use of accredited forms, ceremonies, and rites for the discipline of Christ. For that very reason faith has so largely failed among us; for that reason multitudes, both of the masses of the common people and also of the educated classes, have left the Church. To win them back we need not so much a new theology and new philosophy of religion as a more fearless and faithful application of the discipline of Christ to the individual Christian life and of the programme

of Christianity to our social problems. Because freedom of thought has been restricted in the Church, because the magical and the theological have been substituted for the spiritual and the moral, therefore religion has become utterly unreal to multitudes of men to-day. What we need is a frank return to the original experience upon which the Church was first founded, and which has inspired the faith of the saints in all ages. The faith of mere authority, even if it were any longer possible, could not meet our need. For the faith of authority is ever blind and timid; it is fundamentally faithless; it betrays its lack of confidence by its very temper of anxiety and consternation whenever any one presumes to question it. It shows that it is instinctively uncertain of the grounds upon which it rests by its very insistent prohibition of any investigation of those grounds. It is afraid to open the casket where are stored its family jewels, the deposit of the faith "once for all delivered to the saints"; it dares not submit them to the acid test of inquiry or even to the common light of day, lest under that test its diamonds should prove to be only paste. It is a hothouse exotic; it insists that all questions should be closed, — that is, that every door and window should be shut; it cannot grow out in the fields, in the air and light of common day. Therefore it must be content to become gradually fossilized and relegated to some museum of venerable antiquities upon whose walls hangs the familiar

legend, "Visitors are requested not to touch or handle." No faith can survive to-day which is not sturdy enough to grow out of doors.

The faith of experience is at once firm and fearless; it knows whereof it speaks; it is confident of the ground under its feet and, therefore, it cordially welcomes all investigation and all new light. It is so in any realm of life, in every field of science. To illustrate: Here is that mysterious somewhat, that tremendous force whose essential nature we can probably never penetrate, called electricity. Many are the hypotheses and speculations which the theoretical scientists construct to explain and interpret it. What is our attitude of mind toward those various theories? I take it, it is an attitude which is at once fearless and expectant. We know what this great force has done for us and is doing for us every day; how it runs our machinery, drives our vehicles, lights our houses, flashes our messages over the wires or through the viewless air; how it performs a thousand services for us daily. We are confident, absolutely confident, that it is all that it has proved itself to be in our own experience and the experience of mankind. How much more it shall prove itself to be on deeper study and larger application, we cannot tell. Therefore we leave investigation and inquiry absolutely free, confident that they cannot take from us anything that we already have, sure that they will reveal to us greater wonders yet undreamed of.

Even so in the realm of religion. It is just as sure and certain ground as the realm of natural science. For the objects and facts of spiritual experience are surely as real as the objects and facts of physical experience. Only in both cases the hypotheses and interpretations shift and vary. For example, we know that the Bible is inspired, because it inspires us. We are, therefore, ready to give biblical criticism a free hand, confident that a reverent, searching scholarship shall bring to us yet larger utterances of the Word of God, for we know with the old Puritan Divine, "That God hath yet more light to break forth from His Holy Word."

We know Him on whom we have believed; we know what He has done for our souls. We are, therefore, glad to have a searching historical investigation focussed upon the historic Christ, expectant that we shall arrive at larger and truer conceptions of His personality. We know what the Church has done for us by her ministry and her worship. We welcome, therefore, any most drastic criticism which shall reveal to us defects in her character and methods, and the obstacles in her path which hinder her larger usefulness. We look for yet greater fruitfulness as strengthened, enlightened, even castigated, by such criticism, she applies herself to the new and comparatively untried fields of service that await her in the spiritual conquest of the world, and in her ministries to our civic and social needs. We know what our faith has done

for our souls; how it has lifted many of us from the depths of degradation and despair and set us on the white peaks of purity and far vision. We are, therefore, glad to let a reverent and earnest philosophy and psychology try their hand at the explanation of its processes, looking for the discovery and the exercise of yet larger powers always inherent in its nature, but hitherto unrecognized and neglected, — powers which shall bring greater blessings to our whole life, physical, mental, and spiritual. For if theology is to claim the name of a science at all, it must be just as free and untrammelled as any other science in its search for truth.

Yes, this is the paramount need of the Church to-day if she is to commend her faith to men, — not a New Theology (though that has its place), but a new, more faithful, more persistent, and more profound application of the discipline of Christ to the individual life and of the programme of Christianity to the interrelated life of society. In our Apologetics we have been too long grubbing among the *roots* of our religion, trying to prove the authenticity of our Sacred Books, the genuineness of our traditions, the unbrokenness of our successions, the continuity of our authorities, and the validity of our institution. But Christianity is to be proved not by its *roots*, but by its *fruits*. And this age knows that as no other has. And I am thankful that it does; for it will bring our religion sharply up to just those tests which it can most triumphantly

meet, if we will only have it so. The age is pragmatic in its philosophy and temper. Perhaps it pushes its pragmatism to an extreme on occasion, and asserts with Mr. Dooley that "a lie that is working is the truth, and a truth that is laying off is a lie." At least, it is always saying, sometimes somewhat impatiently, to the representatives of religion, "Granted, for the sake of the argument (though we are by no means sure of it), but granted, for the sake of the argument, the genuineness of your Gospels and the trustworthiness of your creeds, the unbrokenness of your traditions and authority; granted the authenticity of all your sources and the continuity of all the channels which connect you with them, — what of the efficacy and efficiency of your religion to-day? Is the stream that flows from those far-off sources through these unbroken channels, — is it the Water of Life now as you say it was in the days of old? Can it still quench the thirst of our souls and cleanse our sins as it did for the men of yore? Can your ancient Gospel of Love cure our modern injustices and oppressions and the class hatreds that spring out of them? To use Mr. Brierely's illustration: Here is the engineer with his theories of matter, his mathematics of thrusts and counter thrusts and the like. The world will accept just so much of his theories as he builds soundly into his bridge or his building. Besides these he may have all sorts of opinions as to the ultimate nature of matter, whether it be real

or only phenomenal. The world will pass over these theories with absolute indifference. Exactly so does the world to-day treat our religion. "One thing it knows," viz. its experience of the practical effects of that religion. The rest it is indifferent to. Here lies the great task of the Church to-day — to answer in terms of life, of individual character and conduct and of social service, the world's query as to the reality and efficiency of our faith and religion. A few real saints are a better answer to its questions than many sermons or books on theology, — even the New Theology. Are we honestly applying the discipline of Christ, the Sermon on the Mount, for example, to the individual Christian life? Dare we? It will cost, it must cost, something of what it cost the saints of old; but it is worth the cost. Are we realizing the full potentialities of the faith we have, in moral and spiritual self-control, in the development of character and the inspiration of service? Ay, even in the redemption of the body from disease as well as of the soul from sin? A great new field of Apologetics is opening in this region. Let us rise up and take possession of it, and the world will see and believe.

Are we applying the programme of our Christianity fearlessly and faithfully to the crying problems of economic, industrial, and social wrong and injustice which clamor in our ears on every side? Or do we shrink from so perilous an adventure, and are we content to be a mere appanage of the State or of the

aristocracy and the plutocracy; dumb dogs that will not bark because our mouths are stopped with patronage or with social prestige and position?

I am convinced that if we will keep our theologies, new and old, in the subordinate place where they belong, and give our best thought and effort to applying first the discipline of Christ faithfully to the individual life, and second the programme of Christianity fearlessly to the social life, there shall be such a revival of religion as we have never known in modern days; there shall grow up among us again the new and yet old faith of experience, the faith which is at once firm and fearless, and yet withal open to all inquiry and hospitable to all new truth and light; the faith which shall give freedom to the individual mind and liberty to the Church; the faith that shall stand unshakable amidst whatsoever storms of controversy may rage about it, reiterating joyously that old glad triumphant cry: "One thing I know, I know Him on Whom I have believed, I know what He hath done for my soul and what He is doing for the world about me. Therefore I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the Power of God unto Salvation."

CHAPTER XI

THE GOSPEL OF DEMOCRACY

Gal. iii. 28. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

1 Cor. xii. 27. "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular."

WHEN that mighty seer and prophet, Henry George, was engaged in his last great fight, the campaign for the mayoralty of New York, he was called upon one night to address a mass meeting of working-men in the Cooper Institute. The chairman of the meeting, an astute political manager, introduced him in glowing terms as "the friend of the working-man." As soon as Mr. George rose to his feet, he said emphatically and slowly, "I am not the friend of the working-man." There was an instant of strained silence throughout the building; consternation was visible on the faces of the managers on the platform and an ominous look of bewilderment on the faces of the vast audience. The speaker went on, "I am not the friend of the capitalist." There was a palpable sense of relief, but still the audience waited for the final word, and it came. The speaker added slowly and distinctly, "I am for men; men simply as men, regardless of any accidental or

superficial distinctions of race, creed, color, class, or yet function or employment." And instantly the whole audience responded in thunderous applause.

This is the true attitude of the Christian Church and the Christian man toward all social and industrial questions, and toward the classes into which these divide society. This, in part, is the mind which lies behind that great utterance of St. Paul which I have read to you as my first text, "There is neither Greek nor Jew, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Those words set forth the absolute democracy of the Kingdom of God which takes practical form in the catholicity of the Church. That is the essential spirit of the Christian Gospel, and that is the fundamental principle of the Christian Church, although the Church has been too often shamefully false to it.

Let us look for a minute at the world to which these great words were first spoken. It was a world rigidly stratified by the horizontal distinctions of caste and class and partitioned off into non-communicating compartments by the perpendicular walls of race and nationality; there was no sense of a common humanity, of an essential and universal manhood. All mankind was broken up into isolated fragments; there was no bond of sympathy that could stretch across the yawning chasms which divided race from race, class from class, and man from man. There was no sense of kinship even; every

possible distinction was emphasized to its uttermost. There was the distinction of races; the Romans had one word for foreigner and enemy. All the world was divided into two portions, *cives et hostes;* citizens of Rome and enemies. There was the distinction of culture; the artistic, philosophical, and literary Greeks lumped all other peoples together under the one indiscriminate and contemptuous title of "barbarians." There were the distinctions of religion. The Hebrew recognized only two divisions of humanity, the chosen people of the Lord, — the children of Abraham and of God on the one side and the "dogs of Gentiles" on the other. There were the distinctions of sex. In almost all the nations woman was regarded as hardly human; she was simply a thing owned and possessed by her lord and master as a toy for his amusement or an instrument for gratifying his lust. There was the distinction of employment and function in society; the workingmen of Greece and Rome were almost all slaves. As slaves they were no more human than the horse, the dog, or the beast of burden. They were simply the tools of production; they were things to handle and use. And even among those of the same race and religion there were castes of social or religious superiority which permitted of no interchange of sympathy or human feeling. The Pharisee as he walked down the streets of Jerusalem drew his robes aside lest he should be defiled by the touch of the common people, just as the high caste Brahmin in

India to-day avoids all contact with the ordinary Hindu as he would contagion. Here and there a nobler soul had a glimpse of a higher vision, as when the Roman satirist sang, "Nothing human do I count alien from myself." But even a Plato and an Aristotle acquiesced in the common view which regarded the working-man as practically outside the boundaries of a common humanity, and therefore having no human rights.

Into this stratified and divided world came the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And the first thing it did was to proclaim a common humanity and a universal brotherhood of man under the universal Fatherhood of God. With that proclamation it set to work to level all walls and tear down all partitions that divided any man from any other man. It said to the warring nations, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth." It said to the contending religions, "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek or the Gentile, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him, for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Therefore "Circumcision availeth nothing and uncircumcision availeth nothing, but faith that worketh by love." It said to the slave, "Thou are Christ's freeman"; it said to the master, "Thou art Christ's bond-servant and to Him thou shalt give account." It did not directly attack any outward institution such as slavery, but it undermined the foundations of such

institutions with its new spirit of democracy, its new proclamation of equality before God, of universal brotherhood in Christ. For instance, St. Paul sent back the runaway slave Onesimus, whom he found in Rome, to his master Philemon; but along with him he sent a letter which was practically a proclamation of emancipation, one of the tenderest, most beautiful letters ever written, and yet a mighty epistle, for it destroyed the very root and principle of slavery. "Receive this profitless, good-for-nothing fellow," he pleads; "receive him no longer as a servant, a slave, but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, and how much more to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord." And that new spirit of democracy, of universal humanity and brotherhood in Christ Jesus, was an irresistible solvent. It ate its way through every division and distinction that had been set up between man and man and brought all together into the vital contacts of a common fellowship and communion.

And so the Christian Church at first, at least, was an absolutely democratic society. As I have said, the democracy of the Kingdom of God took practical form in the catholicity of the Church. Its principle is well expressed by the great philosopher, Kant, "Treat no man as a means, but always as an end." That is, never take hold of him simply by his function, position, or employment as an instrument and tool to serve thy purposes, but take him ever by the hand as a man and a brother.

Whatever be the loftiness of his position or the greatness of his power and possession, let him be to thee no more than a man and a brother; and whatever be the humbleness of his position or the meagreness of his poverty, let him never be to thee less than a man and a brother. Measure him never by the accidents of his position or possessions, but always by the worth of his personality, the essence of his manhood.

Now here lies, it seems to me, the primary mission of the Christian Church and the first duty of the Christian man in the midst of our social and industrial strife; namely, to realize the democracy of the Kingdom of God and the brotherhood of all men in Christ Jesus. There are other things to be done. For example, there are economic, industrial, and political reforms that must be carried out. The present economic condition is manifestly unjust and intolerable; the wealth produced by the sweat of the brow and the sweat of the brain of the toilers is largely absorbed by a lot of social parasites, the idle holders of privilege. It is also the prey of the predatory activity of our robber barons of Wall Street. These parasites and highwaymen skim off the rich cream of our common production and leave the rest of us, the real producers, nothing but the blue milk. And the consequence is all our involuntary poverty with its unspeakable suffering and misery and its damning effects on life and character. Society itself is largely responsible for most of our crime and our sin. Here lies one deep-seated cause for our social

unrest and discontent, and things will never be settled until they are settled right, and we must see to it that they are settled right. The Christian Church and the Christian man must stand stoutly for economic and industrial justice and equity, for a square deal, for a fair division of wealth, and, above all, for equality of opportunity for every son of man. It is an essential part of our religion to take interest, vital interest, and an active, efficient part in every righteous movement toward that end.

But just what ought the Christian Church to do in these matters?

He would be a bold, not to say a rash, man, who in response to that question should presume to lay down some definite scheme of industrial and economic reform, some particular social programme which it should be the unquestioned duty of every disciple of Jesus to adopt, and to which the whole Church should be bound by her charter to commit herself. Amidst the manifold differences of opinion in such matters which prevail even among earnest and conscientious Christians, no one course of procedure can be set forth as certainly and indisputably *the* Christian course. I, for example, am a single taxer; you may be a socialist or an individualist in your economic creed. As individual citizens, each of us has a right to follow his own convictions in these matters; but as a Christian, no one has a right to make his economic convictions a part of the Gospel of Christ or the creed of the Church.

But there is a deeper duty than that. As Christians, whether as a Church or as individual disciples of Christ, we are concerned primarily not with policies of social reform, but with principles of social justice and righteousness; not with methods of economic or industrial procedure, but with the motives of brotherly love. As Dr. Peabody remarks, "The characteristics of Christ's treatment of all such questions are first, the vision from above, and second, the approach from within." These must also be the characteristics of the Christian's treatment of such questions to-day. The Christian Church and the Christian faith are to furnish the mind, the heart, and the conscience which alone can inspire any effective reform or furnish a spring of action to any vital movement for righteousness and social justice. And unless our Christianity does furnish that mind and heart and conscience, all the schemes and plans of our economists, sociologists, and statesmen, even of our socialists and single taxers, however logically constructed and soundly based, will be but perfect machines with no steam in the boilers to run them.

Therefore the paramount social duty that confronts the Christian Church and the Christian man to-day is not the planning and engineering of economic schemes, but the enlargement of sympathies and the realization of fellowship among all men; the kindling of brotherly love and the spreading of it as by contagion throughout humanity.

This, then, is the first great call that comes to the Christian people to-day, as one has well put it, "To expand their hearts so that they shall be loving all men with Christ's own love; to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep and plan for them that suffer; to bear the burdens of humanity with wise and helpful tenderness; to forswear aristocratic exclusiveness and to minister to men simply as men, just as Jesus did."

Now how are the Christian people fulfilling this paramount duty to-day? How are they meeting this social demand of the age? Sometimes well; sometimes ill. But it is just here that one of the weakest points of our modern Christianity lies.

To the average Christian, whether in the pulpit or the pew, the whole duty of brotherly love, ay, the whole conception of that love, is commonly exhausted in technical charity — mere almsgiving. Set any misery or wrong among his fellow-men before him, any want or need, even any industrial or social oppression or injustice, and he immediately goes for his own pocket-book, if he be in the pew, or for other people's pocket-books, if he be in the pulpit.

This is the one answer the Christian people are prone to give to every social question that is set before them, "Let them that have give." That is the sum of Christian brotherly love. Are there yawning chasms in the midst of our society? Are there deep wounds in the body politic or the body social through which its life-blood is draining away?

Are there enmities, bitternesses, antagonisms, that destroy our industrial peace? Why, then, more money from those who have it. "Give, give." "Build more hospitals, technical schools, public libraries, asylums, homes, churches, charitable institutions; establish patronizing paternalistic schemes for the comfort and welfare of the working-men in your factories, and all the wounds will be healed, all the breaches closed, all the enmities reconciled and bitternesses banished, and we shall be one people again, one in heart and mind and brotherly love.

My friends, these are they who, in the language of the prophet of old, "heal the breaches of the daughter of my people lightly, saying peace, peace, where there is no peace" and can be no peace. We may go on multiplying our charities and beneficences until they are like the sand on the sea-shore, — innumerable, — and they will not heal one wound in the body politic; they will not bridge one of those chasms which so widely divide men from their fellow-men on every side; they will not reconcile one bitterness or enmity which now enflames our too common strife. Mere charity and beneficence without brotherly love, especially patronizing and supercilious beneficence, always antagonize. Charity and beneficence often debauch the conscience of the Church as much as bribes do the conscience of legislatures. If a man only give liberally, she does not often stop to ask, How did you make the money you spend so freely? And if such charity and benefi-

cence come from wealth gotten by dishonest means, they infuriate the popular mind. Even at their best, they sap the manhood and destroy the self-respect of those upon whom they are bestowed. And the world is mortal weary of such charity and beneficence, but it is hungry — starving — for down-right, genuine brotherly love; the love that expresses itself first in common justice and fairness, and then in honest, heart-felt sympathy, mutual understanding and fellowship. That is the only thing that can furnish the basis and inspiration for the solution of our modern social problems.

And that is the one great social business of the Christian Church in these days, our paramount social mission, to breathe into all men that spirit of humanness and permeate society with that atmosphere of Christian love. She is set in the midst of the body politic, industrial and social, with all its manifold variety of functions and interests, as the heart is set in the midst of the body physical, with all its variety of organs and members.

Now, the greatest hindrance to the accomplishment of that mission to-day, the thing that most obstructs and prevents the expansion of the heart and the enlargement of the sympathies which the age demands, is class consciousness. It exists both inside and outside of the Church; and it has grown most alarmingly of late years in this our so-called democratic America. We used to boast that we had no classes. And so far as the outward paraphernalia

of titles and inheritance is concerned, the boast may still be true enough. But I sometimes think that, with the growth of city life and the complications of the industrial world, with the centralization of power in fewer and fewer hands, with the special privileges we have conferred on certain favored classes and the enormous prestige that wealth has obtained among us, we are creating barriers as impassable between men and men among us as all the aristocracies, nobilities, and royalties of the Old World. Our American society bids fair to be as rigidly stratified as any other. And so we are in sad danger of losing our oneness as a people, our fellowship and sympathy, our *esprit du corps*, our very common humanity, and being broken up into fragments by this growing spirit of class consciousness. That class consciousness hinders every effort for better things. It paralyzes our most necessary work in the political sphere, the work of municipal reform. We seem incapable of any united action in dealing with this most pernicious evil of municipal corruption. One class attempts the work of reform in one city and another in another — the labor party in San Francisco and the aristocracy in New York — with the absolutely inevitable result of failure, because the class that undertakes the work runs up against the antagonism of the other class. We can do nothing effective in this work of reform until we are a united people.

It paralyzes our churches and our church-work. We have class churches, exclusive ecclesiastical

clubs for the wealthy, the elite, and feeble missions — or churches offensively labelled "working-men's churches" for the poor. And therefore neither can accomplish anything worth while. Our first Christian duty is to get rid of this pernicious class consciousness.

Now understand me: I cherish no fool's vision of an impossible society wherein there shall be no variety of function and office, and so no distinction of position and honor; where everybody shall stand upon one absolute dead level of dreary uniformity; where all individuality shall be destroyed and society shall be a mere aggregation of "units," each exactly similar to every other, like a heap of sand. Nay, even in that most absolute democracy, the Kingdom of God itself, there must be every possible variety of function, and consequently of position. To use a very homely illustration, human society is very like a pan of milk. Aristocracy and plutocracy would fix certain particles immovably on top in a cast-iron frame of class privilege. Socialism would fix every particle immovably on one dead level in an equally cast-iron frame of social and industrial regulation and arrangement. But true democracy, the democracy of Christ and the Republic of God, would smash all the frames; and then, under the conditions of perfect freedom, the cream would rise to the top and the blue milk would stay below. Ability and character would find their places. But such differences of ability and character, and consequently of position and function, would not and could not harden into

isolating and insulating walls of class consciousness such as divide us now, if this democracy were inspired by the spirit of Christian brotherly love.

St. Paul gives a picture of such an ideal society in his famous apologue or parable, from which I have taken my second text. It is his vision of the Christian Church as the body of Christ. And that ideal Christian Church is but the microcosm, the working model, of what humanity itself is to become when it reaches the goal of the Christian hope; when "the kingdoms of this world shall have become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ." In that body the Apostle sees no absolute equality or uniformity, but every possible variety of function, and consequently of position and honor. There are members fitted for higher and more delicate functions, like the eye and ear, and consequently in a certain sense more honorable; there are members fitted for rougher and more common services, like the hands and feet, and therefore perhaps less honorably esteemed. But though they be "many members," yet are they all "one body and every one members one of another." They are all knit into one common frame. They all serve one common life. They are all nourished from one common heart by one common blood. They are all guided by one central brain, and through them all runs one common nervous system. So are they all held together by a sense of absolute interdependence, mutual need, and common feeling. There can be no arrogance of high position in the

body, for "the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor can the ear say to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'" Neither can there be any despair of low position or humble function. The foot cannot say, "because I am not the hand, therefore I am not of the body," nor the ear, "because I am not the eye, I am not of the body." "For if the whole body were the eye, where were the hearing? And if the whole were the hearing, where were the smelling? And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet are they one body and every one members of one another." So they all from the highest to the lowest need one another, they all depend upon one another, and therefore no one can set itself apart in the independence of pride or the independence of despair, and claim to be the whole thing. Nay, if any one set of members is to have more abundant honor, the Apostle declares that the common standard needs to be reversed, and upon those members which we commonly think less honorable, we bestow the more abundant honor, because they are the most necessary. Society could, on a pinch, get along without its ornamental functionaries. It could just as profitably shake off its burden of the idle rich, the four hundred, as it could its burden of the idle poor, the voluntary tramps and paupers; and it could most profitably dispense with its speculators on Wall Street. All these are industrial and social parasites. But it could not for a moment do without its producers,

whether they are brain workers or manual workers, captains of industry or horny-handed toilers.

Therefore, in the ideal society these would be the members on whom should be bestowed the more abundant honor. Moreover, in that ideal society there shall be a perfect social nervous system, so to speak, so that if any member suffer, even the remotest, the lowest, every other member, even the highest, should suffer with him; and if any one were honored, even the humblest, all the members should rejoice with him. Then would there be "no schism" in the body, but "all the members would have the same care one for another."

There is set forth the Apostle's ideal of the Church, and through it there appears also the ideal of the whole body of human society in general — social, political, industrial, and commercial. It is all summed up in that one phrase, "many members, one body." And for its realization, above all things, that ideal requires openness of circulation and continuity of the nervous system.

Here is the chief social office, the paramount social duty, of the Christian Church and the Christian people of the age: To keep open the circulatory system of society and to fill it with the red blood of common humanity and to keep the continuity of its nervous system. And to do that it must first overcome class consciousness, both in itself and in the world about it. For class consciousness always means a stoppage of circulation and a break in the nervous

system; consequently an atrophy and paralysis of the member. It is like a ligature bound tight about the arm, which shuts the arteries and constricts the nerves and produces numbness and helplessness. For the more any one member sets itself up to be the whole thing and seeks independence of the rest, the more it ceases to be itself as well as a part of the body. And the more any one man or set of men give themselves over to class consciousness, the less service they render to society and the less human they themselves become.

I have gone much among and talked much with the so-called socialists and anarchists of our back streets. And I have often found that to them the people of the avenues and the offices are not really human beings at all, men who "love and hate and have children." Nay, but to them these men of the avenues and the offices are only artificial Frankensteins; machines of iron and steel instead of beings of flesh and blood; mere embodiments of certain lifeless industrial forces which to these men are the cause of their oppression. To them the people of the back streets alone are human. And to just the extent that this spirit of class consciousness and isolation prevails among them, the men who indulge in it seem to me to become unhuman.

I go much among the men, yes, and the women, of the avenues; and often I find this same isolation and class consciousness fully as prevalent among them. Indeed, the average ignorance and the want

of sympathy displayed toward their fellow-men and women outside their own narrow social horizons are frequently far greater on the avenues than on the back streets. To such, these men and women of the back streets are not really men and women like themselves at all, made of the same human clay, with the same red blood in their veins, the same aspirations and feelings in their hearts. Nay, but they are only "hands" which do their work, tools of industry that build up their fortunes, mudsills away down out of sight and out of mind, supporting the splendid structure of civilization and society in which they disport themselves. They know and care to know in a human way only themselves and those who move on the same plane with themselves. The rest they may rate economically according to their productive power as machines of their industry, or recognize charitably as recipients of their alms; but they do not know them humanly as fellows in a common humanity. And in so far as they thus isolate themselves in their class consciousness, they shrivel into something less than men and women; they become unhuman and sometimes inhuman.

Now it is the business, the great social duty, of the Christian Church and the Christian men of to-day to expand the heart, to enlarge the sympathies, until they shall take in all that is human; to refuse to be bound by any limitations of class or caste, any accidents of position, possession, or occupation, and to treat all men simply as men.

That is what Christ did. He was not the rich man's friend. He was not the poor man's friend. But he was the friend of man as he was the Son of Man. He did not stand for labor. He did not stand for capital. He stood for humanity. He insisted upon treating men and ministering to men, never according to the accidents of their peculiar positions, possessions, or functions in society, but simply and always according to the essence of their common humanity. He was to be found now at the ultra-respectable and religious Pharisee's reception and again at the wealthy but godless publican's table. And thereby he doubtless would have incurred unpopularity among the labor-unions of Jerusalem, if there had been any labor-unions in that day. Now he was at the simple home of the Galilean peasant and fisherman, and again among the despised outcasts, the sinners, and even the harlots of the streets of Jerusalem. And thereby He did incur the enmity of the rich and respectable and the religious, the aristocracy of His day, and that enmity brought Him to His cross. But He never hesitated. He mingled freely with them all upon the broad and simple basis of a common humanity. To Him a man was always a man and nothing more, — and what is better, always nothing less.

So must every Christian man or woman do who would follow Christ. So must every Christian minister do who would preach Christ. So, above

all, must the Christian Church do if she would be true to her commission and her Master. She must cut straight down through all the strata of society; she must break through all crusts and limitations of class consciousness of whatsoever sort; she must forswear all exclusive dependence on special client-ages; she must open and keep open the way for a free circulation of the red blood of a common humanity throughout all the arteries and veins of our sadly divided body — political, social, and industrial. She must not fawn upon or be patronized by the classes; she must not truckle to the masses; but she must be the friend and the lover of all that is human.

Such is the duty and mission of the Christian Church in the face of our social and industrial strife. She has very commonly and very shamefully failed in that attitude and mission. I believe she has just begun to awaken to her Divine obligation; God grant her vision to see it and grace to fulfil it.

But one other side of the subject I must present briefly. What is the duty and obligation of the working-man, whether he be a member of the Christian Church or not, if he would follow the leading and principles of Jesus Christ? I am not talking to the employer or the capitalist now. The question I want to bring home to the working-man is, "What is your relation toward the Christian ideal of the service of society and the democracy of the Kingdom of God?"

First, you organize, agitate, educate, and sometimes fight for the maintenance of your rights and privileges. And that is right, with the possible exception of fighting. I believe in labor organizations, I believe in labor-unions. They have their legitimate function and mission. But are you always as sensitive to your duties and obligations as men and members of society as you are about your rights and privileges as working-men? Do you ever use the vast power which your organization gives you ruthlessly, lawlessly, tyrannously, simply to advance your own interests at the expense of right and justice? Then are you as much enemies of the common weal as the great corporations are in their dishonest and oppressive use of their vast privileges and power. Your work — what is it to you? A mere means of getting wages and a livelihood, or is it a sacred thing, a God-appointed function and mission in the service of society? Do you slight it, skimp your job, do dishonest or slovenly work when the eye of the foreman is not directly upon you, or when the demand for labor in times of prosperity is so great that you are reasonably sure of your job, however poor and inefficient your work may be? Do you do efficient service only when you know you are watched or when the scarcity of employment and the difficulty of getting and keeping a job makes it particularly prudent to make a good record? If so, then you are just as much a sinner against the Christian ideal of society as the robber baron on Wall

Street and the unjust and tyrannical employer who uses any means that comes to hand to enrich himself by the defrauding of others, and has no vision of the service of humanity. Or are you equally conscientious and faithful whether watched or unwatched, in good times and in hard times, because you realize your duty, your mission in the service of society? Only as you fulfil these conditions can you meet the requirements of the Christian ideal. The complaint has gone up on all sides lately that in our recent period of prosperity, when labor was at a premium, it was hard to get competent men for jobs requiring skill; efficiency went down; there was carelessness and neglect and poor service, for whatever happened, men were reasonably sure of their jobs. It was particularly so in our railway service, and that was a large contributing cause to many of our frequent and appalling accidents which have brought so much sorrow and suffering to thousands of homes. The ideal end which every man who toils, whether with brain or hands, should set before him, ought to be not merely the wages or the profits or even livelihood, but the service of his fellows. Only as you keep that ideal clearly before you can there be honest work squarely done. I know that under our present unjust and inequitable industrial system it is hard to keep that vision always before the eye, but it is often the test of a man's Christianity and manhood to do the difficult thing.

And second, do you let your class consciousness

build impassable walls between you and your fellows; do you let it set you apart from the common humanity and make you and your class a cyst in the body social instead of an organ and member thereof, partaking in the common circulation and sharing in the common service? Do you let that class consciousness warp your judgment; do you let it prejudice and even jaundice your mind and wither your heart? What is your common attitude and spirit toward those who happen to be over you as employers and captains of industry? Do you treat them as a means or as an end? Do you measure and rate them by the accidents of their position, possession, or functions or by the real essence of their manhood and the worth of their personality? Are they to you only employers or also men and brethren, as you on your side ought to be to them, not simply tools and hands, but men and brethren? Do you regard them with the unreasoning suspicion and blind hostility that spring so naturally out of an inveterate class feeling, or as "men of like passions and infirmities with yourselves" to be judged and treated as you want and expect to be judged and treated? Do you really give due credence to their possible honesty of intention and their desire to do the right and square thing? Do you make due allowance for the difficulties and perplexities which beset them on every side? Ay, and a harder thing than that, do you, as you sometimes ought to, make due allowance for their ignorance and blindness? Do you

stop to realize that many of the injustices from which you and all of us suffer are inherent in the wrong system of things under which we all live and work, and are not the intentional and personal actions of your employers? Do you realize that some of them at least are as eager as you can be for a more equitable and more Christian system of industry? Are you willing and anxious to find points of sympathy and understanding with them and work together for the common good; are you ready to respond to their advances, ay, to make advances yourselves in this direction? These questions will test whether or no you have begun to realize the Christian ideal of the democracy of the Kingdom of God, the service of society, and the universal brotherhood of men under the universal Fatherhood of God.

CHAPTER XII

JEHOVAH, OR GAD AND MENI?

Isaiah lxii. 2. "Ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my Holy Mountain, that prepare a table for that troop and that furnish the drink offering to that number."

PERHAPS a more accurate translation will serve to make my strange text a little more intelligible. "Ye are they that forsake Jehovah and forget my Holy Mountain, that prepare the (holy or sacrificial) table for Gad and fill the mixed chalice for Meni." It is the accusation of the Great Unknown, who wrote the latter part of the book we call Isaiah, the anonymous prophet of the exile, against the captive Israelites. He charges that they were forsaking their national God, Jehovah, that they were forgetting the sanctuary of their race on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. They were joining in the worship of the gods of their conquerers, two of whom are mentioned by name. They were setting up their altars to Gad and pouring out their libations to Meni.

Perhaps you think that this was not a very serious accusation. It sprang probably out of the prophet's national prejudices and sectarian bigotry. After all, it was a mere matter of names. What essential difference does it make by what appellation men

call their Deity, so long as they acknowledge and bow before a great First Cause? You remember Pope's "Universal Prayer":—

> "Father of all! in every age,
> In every clime, adored
> By saint, by savage, and by sage,
> Jehovah, Jove or Lord.
> Thou great First Cause, least understood.
>
> "To Thee Whose temple is all space,
> Whose altar, earth, seas, skies,
> One chorus let all Being raise,
> All nature's incense rise."

So long as they found and worshipped this God, what difference did it make whether the captive Israelites called Him by the Hebrew name of Jehovah or the Babylonian name of Gad or Meni? What did it matter whether they still turned yearningly to their ancient ancestral sanctuary on Mount Zion or simply set up their new altars on the flat plains of Babylon? So possibly would our liberalists of to-day think. So possibly, also, thought the Broad Churchmen among the exiles by the Euphrates. But not so thought the prophet. And I hope to show you that he, and not they, thought rightly.

And furthermore you may ask, "What concern is it of ours, anyhow? We are not in danger of putting Gad or Meni into our creeds or enshrining them over our altars." I think not only that we are sadly in danger of doing that very thing, but that we

very often do it. And this is what I hope to show you before we get through.

The great religious achievement of ancient Israel, the thing they accomplished for all the rest of the world and for which all mankind to the end of time must bless them, was the discovery of a *God with a character*. Robert G. Ingersoll once said, "An honest God is the noblest work of man." If you want to put it that way, then Israel did that "noblest work" for the whole race of humanity through generations of prophets. If you do not like the form of expression, then put it the other way. To Israel, through the ages of its spiritual education, was gradually revealed the "Honest God," the God with a character. The mere form of expression, the language, does not concern me. For I believe that the two processes are but the obverse and reverse side of the same shield. No true discovery was ever made by man that was not at the same time a revelation from God. Every evolution is always preceded and accompanied by an involution. What is developed was first put into the embryo. What is unfolded was first folded up. The fact, the truth, which man only slowly and painfully finds out, first and eternally exists in the counsels and the Being of God; and God has all along been patiently trying to make man see it.

Gradually, as they were able to bear it, the splendid vision dawned upon the seers of ancient Israel. There was much dimness of sight among them.

There was much slowness of response. There were many clouds of ignorance and superstition, of moral and spiritual incapacity, that hid His face from them. Mists there were rising up out of their own hearts that distorted the vision. And yet steadily, from age to age, that vision cleared itself before the eyes of enlightened prophets. The story of Moses sums it all up symbolically. The Man of God hides himself in the cleft of the rock on Mount Sinai. And behold, "Jehovah descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed, 'Jehovah, Jehovah, the God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy with thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; but that will by no means clear the guilty.'" That was Israel's vision of God. That was what the name of Jehovah stood for, at least to her best and loftiest souls; the All-righteous, the All-just, and the All-merciful; "The Holy One that inhabiteth eternity, that dwelleth also in the heart of the humble and the contrite;" the God whose message to His people was ever this, "Be ye holy for I am Holy"; the God whose service is thus summed up by one of His noblest prophets, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God." And to that splendor of justice, righteousness, and mercy set forth in the Old Testament vision of God was added in Christ, "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person," the final glory of

infinite love, and lo, the Heavenly Father stood revealed to all the world.

This has been Israel's gift to humanity; the name of Jehovah, the *God with a character*, stood for all this in actual and potential revelation.

And the sanctuary of this God was Mount Zion. There the worship whose essence, behind all its forms of gorgeous ritual, was always righteousness and justice, mercy and love, continually rose heavenward. And so Mount Zion had not only physical but ethical and spiritual elevation. It stood before the devout Israelite for the moral ideal.

Now let us turn from the Jehovah of Israel to a consideration of the gods of the heathen round about, particularly the deities of conquering Babylon. They were gods, for the most part, without character, or, if they had any, of bad character. The Phœnicians worshipped Baal and Ashtoreth — the one a personification of physical virility, the other of actual lust. The Canaanites had their Moloch, the incarnation of savage and brutal cruelty, to whom children were burned in sacrifice and whom the primitive Israelites even confused with Jehovah Himself. And then across the deserts the conquering Babylonians, among whom the exiles dwelt, had a whole pantheon of deities. Among them our prophet chooses two as most characteristic of their worship, one in common vogue among all the Semites, the other peculiarly Babylonian, Gad and Meni. We might translate them, perhaps, as the Greater

and the Lesser Fortune; Fate and Luck. The word "Gad" has behind it the idea of force; it sometimes means a troop, a host, a military company. It stands for the fate that is backed by force; the fortune that is guaranteed by might. Meni means simply number, perhaps the number on the dice, and stands for pure luck, mere chance, the happy throw of the dice. *Fate* and *Fortune*, *Force* and *Luck*, *Might* and *Chance*, — these were the characteristic gods of the Babylonian conquerors. They were not so much gods with bad characters, immoral gods like those of the Canaanite neighbors of Israel, as they were gods without character, unmoral gods. No idea of righteousness, of mercy, above all, of love, had place either in them or their worship.

Now the captive Israelites over there in Babylon were under sore and besetting temptation. Their old national Deity Jehovah, the God of Righteousness, seemed to be utterly discredited. He survived only as a memory of their idyllic youth. He was only a sweet dream, a fair vision of the old days when they dwelt in their own land hard by Mount Zion and could join in His worship at His chosen sanctuary and order their lives in His service. Yes, then and there, in that far-away land and that far-away time of their national youth, they might have feared and trusted in Jehovah, the God with a character. And it was lovely to do so, lovely even now to think of. But the God of Righteousness had proved Himself

unable or unwilling to defend His land, His people, or even His sanctuary. All had fallen before the mighty arm of Babylon. And now here they were in this strange and foreign land of their conquerors. And here Force and Fate, Might and Chance, Power and Luck, seemed to be omnipotent. These were the gods that counted and prevailed. These were the gods who had the world evidently in their grip. These were the gods that disposed of nations according to their will. They made history; they crowned their devotees with success and glory.

No wonder that the exiles began to give up the idyls and ideals of their youth and yield to the stern logic of life and its stubborn facts. No wonder they began to abandon the discredited God of Righteousness and take up with the new gods of success. "They forsook Jehovah, they forgot His Holy Mountain." And there on the dead levels of Babylon's plains, they "spread their tables to Gad and poured out their libations to Meni."

Do we not understand their experience? A young man starts out in life with glowing moral enthusiasms, with high ideals. He has been religiously nurtured and trained throughout his childhood and youth. And he "is not disobedient to the heavenly vision." He keeps it ever clear before his eyes. He devotes himself to it passionately. Its fire is in his veins. Righteousness, justice, brotherly love, human service, — these are to be the chief concerns of his life. To them he dedicates himself. But by and by, as

the years go on, he wanders out from the home, the school, and the church, into the far lands of a commercial life, into the world of practical business, of practical politics. And the vision begins to dim before his eyes. Clouds gather and hide it from him. His ideals and enthusiasms begin to look first a little impractical and irrational, quixotic, and finally positively absurd, in the sordid atmosphere which surrounds him in this far land. He finds out that righteousness does not always tell immediately in this world. It does not seem to be the prevailing power. It does not always bring at once in its train, wealth, position, success, power, even esteem, as it does in all fairy tales and romances and most novels. This world has a different philosophy of life from that which he has been taught in the kindergarten and the Sunday School, and perhaps by the hearthstone. For a good deal of our education, I am thankful to say, still tends to unfit a man for our successful commercial and political life. The question is, of course, where the real unfitness lies, whether in the education or in the life. Still, I wonder sometimes that some of our great plutocrats and politicians do not found schools and kindergartens, and even Sunday Schools, which shall train their children in the unethical principles and methods which have made them so eminently successful. Perhaps they trust the practical experience of the world to undo the training of the home, the school, and the church. Still, that means so much lost time. Per-

haps, also, some of our heavily endowed universities are expected more and more to conform their teachings, especially in the departments of economics and ethics, to the practices and methods which have enabled their patron saints to equip them so munificently. At any rate, the schism still exists to a large degree between much of our ethical education and much of the practical life in business and politics for which it is supposed to train our young men. And so, —

> "The youth, who daily farther from the east
> Must travel, still is nature's priest,
> And by the vision splendid
> Is on his way attended.
> At length the man perceives it die away
> And fade into the light of common day."

Ay, more, as he gets on into the more westerly regions of life, not only is the splendid vision gone, but he finds a sordid vision taking its place. For the world about him for the most part not only knows not his philosophy of life, but, still more, it knows not his religion. It worships other gods. Instead of the old God of Righteousness, it bows down before the little gods of force and fate, of might and chance, of power and luck, even of cunning and craft. He must adjust his life to the exigencies of his new environment, just as the captive Israelites had to in the land of their exile. He must solve the schism between his old ideals and his new conditions. And

he does so quite commonly in one of two ways. First, he may try a compromise life. He is pious on Sundays and worldly on Mondays. He goes to church and reads his Bible and says his prayers. Perhaps he teaches in Sunday School and does church-work. And then for the rest of the week, having satisfied his conscience, he conforms easily to the comfortable codes of practical business and still more practical politics. He establishes a little sanctuary in the midst of his life where he may resort, on occasion, at the great feasts, and dream of the old God of Righteousness, the vision of his youth. Once a week regularly he climbs the Holy Mount of Zion and worships formally before Jehovah. And then, for the rest of the time, he betakes himself to Babylon and falls down before its gods.

Or else, being more clear-sighted, more honest and consistent, he abandons entirely the effort at a dual life with double standards; he frankly surrenders himself every day to the ways and fashions of the world about him. He gives up church and Sunday and every form of the religious life, and becomes openly and cynically worldly. "He forsakes Jehovah, he forgets the Holy Mountain, and builds his altar to Gad and pours out his libation to Meni." He frankly and openly worships the powers that prevail in the world about him, the powers that evidently crown their devotees with glory and success; force and fate, might and chance, cunning, craft, luck, — these are his gods.

Is not that the story of many a career which the world calls eminently successful?

But, thank God, there are successful careers, too, of another kind; the story of many a life proclaims the truth that a man may serve Jehovah, the God of Righteousness, may be true to the moral ideal in the commonest fields of practical life, and yet may make a sublime success of his career. It is not invariably necessary to conform to the meaner passions and low ethical standards of your environment in order to win out even in this present world.

But whether so or not, here is the searching, the final, question which goes to the very heart of our religion, which tests and proves its very essence, — who and what is our God? What do we really worship? To what do we give our hearts' most passionate devotion, our lives' most strenuous and absorbing effort?

Is it to the great Main Chance? Is it to Fate and Force, to Cunning and Craft, — these powers that seem to rule and prevail in the world about us? Is life to us chiefly a scramble and a gamble for prizes in which brute strength and blind luck are the determining factors? Then are we heathen indeed, no matter how much we go to church, no matter what creeds we say, no matter what sacraments we observe, no matter what pieties we practise, no matter how generously we give to charity and beneficences.

Or do we "follow after righteousness supremely,"

though we be a long way from attaining unto it in its perfection? Are justice and love, honor and honesty, integrity and uprightness, human service and helpfulness, in the commonest acts and relations of our lives, — are these the ideals to which we give ourselves utterly at whatever price of privation and sacrifice; ay, though it cost us a cross as it did Jesus? Then are we essentially servants and sons of God; then is our "spot the spot of His children," whether we can say all the creeds and observe all the observances that are set for us or not. Then are we worshipping Jehovah, the God with a character, the God of Righteousness, the God that was revealed once for all in Jesus Christ, who is "the Brightness of His glory and the express Image of His person."

CHAPTER XIII

THE USES OF LIFE

St. John xvii. 19. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

So Jesus Christ summed up the law of His life. And in that law of the ideal life is uttered the law of every true life. Two moments or elements, two movements or processes, are suggested in these words; one self-regarding and one other-regarding, one centripetal and the other centrifugal. The first is culture, and the second is service.

In the perfect life these two are closely interrelated and interdependent. Each is penetrated by the purposes and spirit of the other. In the perfect life, all culture is in order to service; and all service roots in and draws its sustenance from culture. All self-development, however careful and elaborate, is irradiated and transfigured by the thought, the intention of a future giving of self in service, and thereby it is made unselfish. And all self-giving rests upon and gets its value from that self-development.

And so in the perfect life the centripetal and centrifugal movements are balanced. The individual and social aspects are coördinated; while in our

common thinking, and still more in our common living, we are frequently sacrificing one to the other. The individuality must be absorbed and lost in social service, — that is the theory of a false socialism and too often the practice of the unwise enthusiast. Or else all consideration of the blessing of our fellows and the good of society is sacrificed to the aggrandizement and development of the individual. That is too often the rule of our common living which governs the practice prevailing in the commercial, educational, social, and religious world. But the perfect life, the life lived after the law of Christ, would produce the most perfect and complete individual in order to the most perfect and complete service of society.

Let us look for a moment at the Christ-life, that we may see how His law works out, and then apply it to the various ranges of our common living.

In our thought about Him we ordinarily forget or ignore His self-culture, His self-development. The Gospels, for the most part, present only the record of His active service to others. They tell us little of His culture and development of Himself. They exhibit the Wonderful Life by its effective side, not by its receptive side. It is His public ministry which for the most part they set before us. Of course, it is the public life, its record of deeds and words, the measure of its outflow of wisdom and beneficence, which belongs primarily to the public. And yet there *is* another side to that life, of which

we get plain intimations here and there. We catch glimpses now and then into the backgrounds where lie those hidden springs which fed that marvellous outflow. And those springs are so rich and abundant! Indeed, measuring any way, by duration or by fulness, the recipient side of Jesus' life is much larger than the efficient. His self-culture is, in a sense, greater than His active service to others.

Did you ever think of it even in terms of time? Thirty years of preparation for three years of service. How that fact puts to shame our foolish and vulgar haste to crowd our boys and girls out into the thick of life's productive activities before they have begun to accumulate an adequate stock of either knowledge, ability, or character, the capital for life's trading, before they have ripened their own souls, before they have sufficiently developed the muscles of either body, mind, or spirit, before they have acquired their own full selfhood.

Thirty years in God's best schools, amidst the domestic love and intercourse of the quiet home at Nazareth and on the village streets, mingling in the humble, common life, taking His part in its ordinary occupations and fellowships, that He might know men; and also, we may be sure, dwelling much apart and alone amidst the solitudes of the meditative hills that He might know God. All that long, silent preparation in order to that brief but intense ministry.

And then all through that ministry we get glimpses

now and then of what must have been an habitual practice. There were lonely nights of prayer and thought between those busy days of service, great focal mountain peaks of silent meditation and communion which fed out of their abundant richness the incessant activities of the valley-life below.

There is the suggestion of the recipient side of the Christ-life, its perpetual self-culture and self-development. Here it was that He accumulated that infinite fund of spiritual wealth which, in spite of all the tremendous and constant drain upon it, made inexhaustible the richness of his life. And therefore it is that we always feel when we stand before Jesus that we are in the presence of a boundless sea of spiritual vitality. No matter what wisdom comes from His lips, no matter what virtue goes out of Him into the needs of humanity that touch Him on every side, you know that an ocean of abundance waits and presses behind. There is never any of that hurry, that weariness, that fretfulness or impatience which always in our busy lives betrays a sense of inward emptiness. There is never any suggestion of the most distant approach to exhaustion. The life is always fresh and full; the personality always strong and adequate to the demand, for it is ever open Godward; it is always fed out of that secret spring. It is a life "hid in God." It is intensely individual, even when most given in service and sacrifice. The Personality is never lost or merged in the ministry; it is simply accentuated

and strengthened thereby, and finds its fruition therein.

Here, if we will listen, we may hear Christ saying, "I sanctify Myself, I develop and fulfil Myself."

And yet Christ is never in the least degree spiritually selfish. There is about Him none of the egotistic, self-centred sanctity of the monk or the nun; none of the spiritual hoarding of the hermit or the recluse. The monastic idea is the isolation of the individual soul from all the rest of the world that it may perfect its own holiness in the solitude of that separation, in a kind of moral quarantine and spiritual asepsis. Its language is ever, "For my own sake I sanctify myself that I may win the crown of my salvation, or the splendor of sainthood." It makes spiritual misers. But that is never the Christ-idea. Rather is the Christ-idea always the accumulation of spiritual capital in order to spiritual expenditure. Through all the moments and process of His spiritual self-culture we can see Him ever looking out into the larger ranges of life that wait beyond, on to the coming Apostles and disciples, — yes, over their heads on into the great world beyond them, saying, "For *their* sakes, for *their* sakes, I sanctify Myself that *they* may also be sanctified through the truth."

Recall that scene in the Temple when the boy of twelve stood among the doctors, "both hearing them and asking them questions," an eager soul, all athirst for the truth, still at school, accumulating knowledge, getting ready for life. And yet in the

midst of that very process of acquisition, in the midst of all that conscious and unconscious self-development, He has His eyes steadily fixed upon the great mission that awaits Him somewhere beyond; "He feels the years before Him and the coming of the strife." "Wist ye not," He asks His wondering parents, "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" And with that thought burning in His bosom, He turns Him back quietly again to other long years of preparation among the seclusions of the home and the streets of retired Nazareth and the silences of its hills. This one glimpse into the heart of these years of preparation gives us insight into the spirit that pervaded them all. All their culture was irradiated with the consciousness and the purpose of the great service that waited beyond. And so all that personal development was kept from becoming self-centred, and thereby spoiled.

And this, as I have said, is also the law of every true life.

Now we frequently forget this law of the perfect life. We quite commonly emphasize one of these processes at the expense of the other. And so we make our lives ill-proportioned. We get them out of balance, out of gear. Here on the one hand is the man or the woman with a superfluity of zeal, but with little knowledge and less wisdom; full to the brim with good intentions and energy, but without one single well-developed gift or talent of usefulness, without any trained abilities for service, incapable,

inefficient. Here is, for example, the crude reformer. He is fairly consumed with the passion of service, but he has no particular ability, knowledge, or wisdom wherewith to serve. But that lack in no wise hinders him, even if he ever discovers it. Ability, wisdom, knowledge, trained capacities, — these are not necessary to human service, but only good intentions, only zeal and energy. And so he flings himself enthusiastically, recklessly, into every new fad that offers itself. The most difficult field, the service that requires the most consummate tact and the profoundest wisdom, has no terrors for him, for "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." And the result is, he spoils everything he touches. He makes a wreck of everything he attempts. Bishop McVicker tells a story about a dear old motherly elephant, whose heart was overflowing with tender compassion for all things weak and helpless. She started out one morning to find something upon which to bestow this excess of maternal instinct. In an unlucky hour she found a little brood of partridges, whose mother had temporarily left the nest to seek food. "You poor, deserted, motherless creatures," she cried, "I will mother you, I will care for you, I will brood over you," and forthwith, with disastrous results to the partridges, she sat down upon them as tenderly as she knew how. The world is full of such blundering beneficence. I sometimes think it has suffered more from fool saints than from intentional knaves. Zeal without knowledge,

good intentions without ability or wisdom, have worked as much havoc as either apathy or malevolence. There is not lacking a grain of truth in that sarcastic division of all mankind into two classes — the good and inefficient on the one side, and the bad and efficient on the other.

The motto of this inane and insane zeal would seem to find fit expression in that absolutely fatuous aspiration of the Gospel hymn, —

> "O to be nothing, nothing,
> Only to lie at His feet,
> A broken and emptied vessel,
> For the Master's use made meet."

As if the Lord or anybody else had any particular use for broken crockery. The ambition to be "nothing, a broken and emptied vessel," is easily gratified, and many there be that attain thereto. But if you are to be of any use to God or man, you must be *something* and *all* that you can be. You must make of yourself the largest and best vessel possible, and fill yourself up to the brim with trained and cultivated abilities. It is a high art, this art of service, of doing good, and it requires much ability and wisdom. Therefore the first duty and the prime necessity in order to any efficient, useful service, is culture of some sort, self-development, the training and realization of whatever gifts God may have endowed you with in potentiality.

I wish I could burn that truth into the conscience

of every young man or woman on the threshold of life; the necessity not only of preparation, but the best preparation possible, for the demands and duties of that life. We Americans, in particular, are in such haste to get at life that we generally do not make any adequate preparation for it. Especially would I burn that conviction into the conscience of all who feel called to any high vocation or mission of beneficence, whether it be the ministry, or going on a mission to the heathen or to the slums, taking up social settlement work, following the physician's or the teacher's noble profession, redeeming our politics from the grip of bossism and corruption, or even that which is as high as any other calling, playing manfully the part of a good citizen or being a gracious woman, a real queen of society, dispensing grace and wisdom at every touch, or, best of all, being the head and the heart of a home, the father and mother of children. Zeal and energy, good intentions and the will for service, are not enough. You must somehow acquire the wisdom and the abilities of service, the best that God has put within your reach. Full well the ancient law runs, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." *As thyself.* Remember that in God's providence you are your own nearest neighbor. And your love for yourself is made the standard and the measure of your love for your fellow. And he who has not learned to love himself — I mean not selfishly and foolishly, but wisely and well — is not apt to love his other neigh-

bors to much purpose. If you are going to save anybody else, you must save yourself first; and if you are going to *do* anything worth while, you must *be* something first. Therefore, love yourself first, love yourself into the best possible of selves, that you may have the best possible of selves wherewith to serve; ay, and that you may have the best possible of selves to sacrifice, if you are called to the highest duty and privilege of sacrifice. Remember that on Israel's altar naught could be offered except that which was perfect, fully developed and unblemished. That is the first half of the law of the Christ-life. "I sanctify myself. I cultivate and develop myself into the best possible of selves."

But more of us, I think, are apt to forget the other side of the law of the Christ-life. More of us, perhaps most of us, get our lives out of balance, out of gear, in the other direction. I speak now to the privileged. There is a common and fatal tendency among the privileged to spend all their privileges solely upon self-enrichment instead of spending them in service. Our very culture often focusses our gaze upon the centre of the individual life instead of making us look out to the circumferences of the general life. It is that habit which narrows and shrivels many a privileged man or woman, until, by and by, as life goes on, he becomes a mere hand to grasp and a maw to swallow. It is not zeal without knowledge that threatens the cultured class of to-day; it is knowledge without zeal. It is not enthusiasm

without efficiency that is the peculiar danger of the educated man or woman; it is efficiency without enthusiasm. It is the ability that seeks for naught but the gratification of personal ambitions, the culture that looks to no service but that of self; it is the blasé indifference which finds nothing worth doing except that which interests and amuses. It is this which turns so many privileged lives — lives that ought to be springs and fountains of strength to all the community — into purposeless whirlpools, sometimes into stagnant, malaria-breeding swamps. It is the outward look, persistent, habitual, that can alone save a privileged life from such a fate.

Let me illustrate briefly in the various ranges of privilege: —

For example, to start with the lowest range, what is it that turns the natural, useful instinct of acquisitiveness, the desire to make money, to increase wealth, to create things, into the curse of greed and covetousness? Is it not the spirit which says, "I would get simply that I may have; and I would have only that I may hold; and I would hold only that I may gratify to the full every appetite of my body, every desire and ambition of my mind; that I may build myself about with walls of defence against the calamities of poverty that overwhelm other men; that I may set myself alone upon a pedestal for the admiration and adulation of the common herd; or, worst of all, that I may have power over my fellows, power to make them serve me, — ay, power to lord it

over them, if I be so minded?" That is the meaning and the sole meaning of wealth to many who have it. Wealth acquired and held in that spirit becomes a curse alike to possessor and possessed (for wealth means practically the possession of other men), however honestly and honorably that wealth may have been won. O for more men and women of great possessions in our commercial and social worlds who would say deliberately, looking out on their fellow men and women in all the wide circles of their need, "For *their* sakes, for *their* sakes, I would have that they also may have. And I would have them have, not simply by my giving to them, for that develops supercilious patronage on the one side and fawning dependence on the other (charity often kills two souls at one blow), — nay, but by sharing with them every privilege and blessing that comes to me." For it is what we share, and not what we give, that blesses alike giver and receiver.

Wealth that is spent in mere personal luxuries and ostentations makes of its possessor the most contemptible of creatures. He becomes less than a man, because he is less than human. Wealth that is merely doled out in alms and charities may become a curse to giver and receiver alike. But wealth, that is shared with the whole community in public service, that wealth alone blesses both the man and his fellows. And he alone who knows how to use wealth so has learned that fine and most difficult and most Christian art, the art of being rich.

So also is it with that higher and richer privilege of culture as it is conventionally understood, your intellectual training and education. It also finds its best expression and fullest realization in service only. A question that was much discussed in our papers some years ago will bring out clearly what I mean. A great captain of industry once declared in a public address that a liberal college education is of no use to a young man who seeks success in life. I was interested both in the declaration and in the answers made to it. Some of the advocates of a higher culture replied, with a little heat, that it was not so; that the graduates of our colleges always stand at the top in most of the practical pursuits of life. I think that there is a fair question between the money-king and these advocates of culture on this score. I have known of college graduates who attained no higher positions than that of a motorman on a street-car, and some even I have found among those modern knight-errants, the tramps and hoboes. If success means only making money, getting along in the world, I cannot see that a college education would especially develop any of those specific faculties which tell directly in the getting of gold. Indeed, I can conceive that a true education, a real culture, might be a hindrance in that pursuit. Money-making requires intense concentration; and culture would tend to awaken tastes and desires which might divert some of the energy and thought of the man or the woman from the one all-absorbing passion of acquisitiveness.

It might also arouse in the conscience delicate scruples against some of the ruthless methods by which money, especially in the form of large and sudden fortunes, is so commonly made nowadays. On the whole, a pig is better fitted than a scholar for a scramble in a trough.

But a better answer was given to the money-king's criticism of culture. The object of existence is not merely the amassing of the means of existence, — for that would be reasoning in a circle; we live to get and we get to live, — but the enjoyment of life. And the educated, cultured man or woman gets infinitely more out of life than the uneducated and uncultured. He has more resources. He has developed tastes and capacities for all the higher pleasures which feed so richly life's enjoyments, such as art, literature, music, travel, and the like. That is a better answer; yet does it not hit the mark, the true meaning, and purpose which makes all culture incalculably valuable. For culture which is self-centred, whether it look merely to material aggrandizement or to æsthetic enjoyment, is misapplied, and soon sours and spoils. It misses the richness and fulness of life by the very fact of aiming directly and consciously at that richness and fulness. It loses the truest and highest enjoyment of life by just seeking it. The true and only worthy object of all culture is service, the service of society at large and the service of the individual fellow man or woman. And it is those who give away their culture

most widely and freely through the life of service, through the work of the teacher, the professional man or woman, the resident in a social settlement, or just through the common contacts of society and neighborhood, of friendship and family life, — these are they who get the most for themselves out of their culture. This is the true end and aim of all education, the right attitude of all privilege, the only spirit that can get out of it for ourselves as well as for others all the best that it holds, the spirit that speaks in those words of the Christ, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself that they also may be sanctified through the truth."

There are five purposes, one or the other or several of which men and women commonly set before themselves as the primary objects of living: —

These five are these: to have, to enjoy, to know, to do, and to be. To have and enjoy, — these are the commonest aims of life. They constitute the materialistic aim, the common ambition. To know, — that is the student's, the scholar's, end. To do, — to do something in the fields of fame, perhaps, at least in the fields of achievement in this world, — that is the ambition of every man or woman of energy and capacity. And to *be* — to be the thing one was meant to be, to attain the ideal of personal character, — that is the spiritual man or woman's goal, the saint's ambition.

These aims are all equally wrong, if pursued for their own sakes only, or for your own sake only; they

are all equally right, though not all equally high, if brought into obedience to the law of the perfect life, the law of culture in order to service. Thus, then, I would sum up my meaning. This, then, I would say to those who stand on the hither verge of life.

Enjoy all you rightfully can of what life brings you; accept thankfully and without hesitation all the innocent richness and pleasure God gives you in it. There is no virtue in voluntary gloom and self-inflicted meagreness, in self-denial for its own sake, all the monks and nuns of history to the contrary notwithstanding. Only let your pleasure never end in mere enjoyment; never make your life absorbent, but rather let it make your life so radiant that it may shed the light of gladness into all the gloom about you. In the language of the new psychology, be the euphoriac, the bearer of cheer, the transmitter of gladness, the brightener of the world. Have all you can have, righteously and honestly, but have not merely to hold, but to share, — that is the true purpose and philosophy of wealth. Do all that you can do, not simply that you may achieve, but that you may help. That is the true purpose of all energy, the goal of all ambition. Know all that you can know, not simply that you may hoard that knowledge for your own æsthetic pleasure and enrichment, but somehow that you may serve therewith, — that is the meaning of all culture. And lastly, be all that you can be, not simply that you may *be*, but that you may bless by your being

what you are. Make all you can out *of* yourself, but never *for* yourself.

Let all your culture be in order to service. Look ever through all its processes, not inward to the centre of the individual life, but outward to the circumference of the larger life, the life of others, saying after Christ, "For their sakes I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

CHAPTER XIV

THE DIVINE COMPANIONSHIP

St. John xvi. 32. "Behold the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."

THESE words were spoken in the shadow of the cross. They tell of the loneliness of Jesus. In a very real sense that loneliness pervaded the whole of Jesus' life. He was alone on the heights and the common levels of His experience, as well as in the depths. That is the penalty of all true greatness. The great soul dwells in a sphere apart from his fellows. Few there be who can think his thoughts after him — few who can share his visions. It was preëminently so with Jesus. Again and again we see Him uttering some great word, and then looking wistfully into the faces of His nearest disciples for some token of sympathy, some sign of bare understanding, only to meet with disappointment. The solitariness of high vision, the loneliness of deep insight, the solitude that always comes with the possession of truth, too big for others to comprehend, — all this was part of Jesus' daily experience. Yes, He was much alone on the heights and the common levels of His experience. But

steadily, step by step, He felt that loneliness deepening as He descended into its depths.

First, there was the gradual slowing down of all the wheels of life. Activity was ceasing, passion was beginning. The days of His ministry were ended. There were to be no more sweet, calm discourses on the hills of Galilee or by the shores of Gennesaret with the eager, upturned faces of the multitude before Him; no more busy days of healing; no more absorbing works of beneficence and mercy upon the clamoring needs of men. The bustle of life was quieting down. He was being driven steadily inward from its loud and crowded surfaces into its silent and solitary depths. All doing was done; suffering was to begin, — and like all suffering, it must be met alone.

And then, there was the gradual shrinkage of life; its companionships were beginning to drop off. First, His popularity failed Him. The multitudes who had so long followed Him and hung upon His lips, had already melted away, and now in this sublime farewell discourse which followed the Last Supper He was bidding good-by to His friends. They, too, should be "scattered every man to his own and leave Him alone." Like the wrestler in the arena, He was stripping Himself for the last struggle. Such glimpses we get through these words into that abyss of loneliness whose depths no man can sound.

But Jesus immediately adds other words of

strange confidence. "And yet," He says, "I am not alone, for the Father is with Me." The sense of an inward Divine sympathy steals into the silence made by the hush of the world's busy activities, and fills that silence with an ineffable peace. The consciousness of a Divine companionship occupies all the vacancy made by human desertion. We can feel that sense of Divine fellowship; we can discern its peace and strength and solace throughout the story of the cross. It sustains Him in the solitary struggle of Gethsemane. "Father, if this cup may not pass from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done." Its joy rings like a great, glad undertone throughout the sad threnody of the passion. Once only, at the supreme moment, it seems to fail Him, and He cries out in utter desolation: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But it is for the moment only. Soon, almost immediately, the sense of that Presence comes back again to sustain Him to the end, and He breathes His last prayer in perfect peace. "It is finished; Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

What is the secret of that strange sense of Divine companionship in the midst of human solitude, which so fills the story of Christ's life and particularly His passion? Humanly speaking, it lies in that diligent and habitual practice of the presence of God which we discern everywhere throughout the story of His active ministry. It finds its origin in His persistent and continuous companionship

with God. It is the open secret of habitual prayer. In those lonely nights of vigil on solitary mountain peaks between the busy days and above the crowded valleys of incessant activity, — there are hidden the secret springs that fed through subterranean channels the river of His peace and joy which made glad the desert wastes of solitude and suffering. There is the source of that fountain of sweet waters which wells up through all the salt sea of His desolation.

We all have our seasons of loneliness, and there abide within each of us in the deepest depths of our being vast tracts of inward solitude where we always dwell alone. Our lives are built much like that ancient temple of Jerusalem, court within court. Outermost is the court of the Gentiles, where sit the money-changers and they that buy and sell, and our ears are filled with the clink of coin and the chaffer of traffic. There is where most men dwell habitually. Then next within is the court of the women, where is heard the prattle of children; there in the domestic circle we commonly take refuge when the outer world begins to fail us. And then comes the court of the priests, of formal religion, with its bustle of rites and ceremonies. Perhaps some of us betake ourselves thither when the more superficial aspects of life begin to disappoint us. But within all lies the innermost shrine of our being, the Holy of Holies, empty and silent save only when the Shekinah of the Divine presence fills it. We all

know it, we all feel it. Beneath all the crowded and noisy surfaces of our lives lies this sanctuary of the soul, this innermost self, this impenetrable personality and individuality. And how most of us dread it; how few of us dare face our souls; how afraid we are to be alone with ourselves even for a moment. And why? Ah, because we feel so terribly lonely and solitary there. It is such a silent and awful place. Therefore we fling ourselves frantically to the surfaces of life; therefore we absorb ourselves in life's activities, and fill our ears with its noise and bustle because we cannot endure the silence and solitude within. Therefore we dwell habitually in the courts of the money-changers or the women, even of the priests, anywhere but in the Holy of Holies within. And yet, steadily, step by step, as life goes on, particularly as it begins to decline, we are driven back upon that inward loneliness. As the wheels of activity slow down, we are forced to face that awful silence; as the companionships of the world drop off, one by one, we are driven more and more in upon ourselves, till at last we must confront that final experience through which each must pass once and alone.

There are periods of that inevitable loneliness even in the midst of our busiest activities and most crowded days. There are times when, at the touch of some great joy or sorrow, some profound experience, the world suddenly melts away from us and we are left utterly to ourselves. It is then, if ever, that we feel our need of God; it is then we grope

after Him, if haply we may find Him, for we know intuitively that He and He alone can share that solitude with us. That is the very central secret of the spiritual life; that is its most essential and characteristic note, the finding of the presence of God in the solitude of the soul. He alone is the mature Christian who can say at such a moment, "I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

For example, there is your secret sin. Perhaps it has become an intolerable burden to you. You would fain ease yourself of it by open confession, by at least sharing the knowledge of it with somebody else and getting some sympathy, if not absolution. But you dare not tell the public; it would only ruin your reputation and avail naught; an unsympathetic world cannot help you. If you are a Roman Catholic, you can tell it to the priest, and great relief there is often in that. And yet, I take it, there are some sins that even the most devout Roman Catholic would not tell his most trusted Father Confessor. You shrink from opening your guilt to even your nearest and dearest, lest you chill and repel the love which is more to you than life, — ay, the love by which you live.

Ah, do we not all know in some measure the awful loneliness of secret sin? And we are in the habit of calling some sins only secret sins, but they are really all secret so far as we can keep them so. Some of them we dare not confess even to ourselves. The base motives, the half-conscious hypocrisy,

the lie of life which lurks deep and unsuspected beneath our fairest conduct, the doubleness of our daily living, the duality of our inner selves, we would fain hide them from all eyes, even our own. And how terrible is the secret when at some moment it is involuntarily unveiled to us, and we are forced to stand face to face with it, when perhaps it climbs to the housetop, and there proclaims itself before the world. Yes, we know that awful loneliness of sin. Is there any way of escape from that loneliness? Yes, if you have really found the presence of God within, then can you bring God into your secret. If you have cultivated the friendship and fellowship of Christ, you can tell it all to Him, for not only can He understand the baseness and guilt of it, which is all that men see, but He understands it all. He knows that baseness and guilt as no one else can; but He understands also what nobody else can, all the mighty temptation that drove you into it. He understands also all the weakness and infirmity which left you well-nigh defenceless against the power of those temptations. He understands also, as no one else can, your sense of guilt, your agony of shame and humiliation, under it. Yes, bring Him into the loneliness of your sin. Share the intolerable burden with Him; open all its guilt to Him, and you will find the peace of His pardon cleansing you down to its deepest and most putrid depths; you will find also springing up within you the grace of a new hope and the

strength of a new moral manhood, which will enable you to rise up and face once more your old battle with a humbler spirit and yet a spirit of greater confidence. Even in the depths of your sin, perhaps there, as nowhere else, you can say, if you only will, "I am not alone, but through Christ the Father is with me."

So it is also with the depths of your sorrow. Some great grief suddenly overwhelms you. The blackness of darkness shuts in about you, and sets you apart from all the rest of the world. Perhaps you still must mingle with the crowds in the throng and press of an active life, but somehow you feel utterly separate in the midst of your fellows. The loneliness of the crowd is the loneliest of all solitudes. All are strangers to your grief. They cannot enter into that experience which just now absorbs all your thoughts and seems to absorb your being. Your grief has become the very atmosphere of your life; in it you live, move, and have your being. The commonplaces of consolation, perhaps, are spoken to you by some, but they seem meaningless, for the most part. Even the voices of your friends sound faint and far off, as if they came out of another world, a world in which you yourself once lived, but now remote from you. Now and then perhaps you can say, "some one hath touched me," for you feel dimly the outgoing and incoming of a real sympathy, but it is only a touch from the outside after all; nobody, even your best beloved, can really

enter into and share with you your own peculiar and personal sorrow; for "the heart knoweth its own bitterness and a stranger intermeddleth not therein." There is nothing like the loneliness of a great sorrow, except, perhaps, the loneliness of a great sin.

But if you have learned to walk with God in the common day of your ordinary living, He becomes to you now your sure refuge in your night of sorrow. You enter into the darkness of your sanctuary of grief, and lo, you find its shadow at least mellowed by the Shekinah of His presence. There is a subtle sense of an inward divine sympathy and understanding so different from the human consolations that can reach you only from the outside. Some One knows, some One understands, ay, and knows and understands it all even better than you do yourself. A voice speaks within, and it speaks directly to your heart; it is the voice of the Father Who hath not left you alone in your grief, but is with you even in its last solitude.

So it is also on the heights of our being. Some great vision of truth or beauty dawns upon you; great thoughts and aspirations surge through you; you cherish in the secret of your soul some surpassing ideal of life, character, or service; some profound experience of inward joy and blessedness is given you. You fain would share that with some one else. But, when it comes to the point of trying to share it, a sudden shyness or reticence seizes you;

you are not sure of the sympathy and understanding even of your best beloved; you are not sure that he can occupy the exact viewpoint upon which you now stand and so see the thing just as you see it, and you shrink instinctively from possible misapprehension, perhaps even from possible ridicule. Perhaps you fear the suspicion of hypocrisy or cant, or perhaps, again, the thing itself is so unutterable, the experience so ineffable, that you cannot put it into any intelligible language. How dumb we all become when it comes to expressing the highest and best things we feel and know.

But to feel that there is One Who understands perfectly just because He is the very Author and Inspirer of all that is deepest and best in us, — ah, how that irradiates the loneliness of our joy with a new joy, the joy of a perfect sympathy! Yes, there on the heights of our being we are not alone, for the Father is with us through His indwelling spirit.

This is not an idle fancy; this is not the language of mere gushing sentimentality; least of all, the language of cant; it is a tremendous reality, — I was going to say, it is the commonplace of Christian experience. Innumerable witnesses through all the ages can be called to testify to it. Let me show you what I have been feebly trying to say in the language of another, who has put it better than I can hope to: "It is one of the commonplaces of human observation that every man and woman has a secret life, an unexplored self, of which the world knows

nothing. We often imagine that the lonely people in this world are simply those who, for one reason or another, have been unable to form those social ties which are the common features of social life; but there is a much wider sense in which every human creature is lonely. The real loneliness of men and women is the loneliness of individuality, and this cannot be remedied by any social affinities. It may be modified, no doubt; we may find a friend who understands us, or in married love we may find an intimacy which lifts the burden of the years by sharing it. But in the closest of all human relations there is imperfect contact. Large areas of our nature lie unexplored even to the quest of the tenderest love. Beneath the face that smiles upon us daily with the friendliest confidence lies a whole world of thought and feeling of which we have but the faintest and most fugitive of glimpses, or none at all. For many people language is an embarrassment rather than a means of self-revelation; they are totally unable to express their real selves to any other. Men and women often live together in the intimacy of the household for long years, and only once or twice, in some rare moment of emotion, really know each other's hearts. What makes the tragedy of such a situation is that all the time each knows the other worth knowing, and desires a closer knowledge, but gropes in vain to find the clew to intimacy. Does any human creature ever tell another all that is in his or her heart? Dare

they? Where can we be sure of utter comprehension and sympathy that we may venture to unlock the last door of the heart and invite inspection? Of whom among the men or women we know can we be sure that 'to know all is to forgive all'? Alas, in the best of us there are hidden motions of the spirit, there are the records of hideous things said or done in past years; there are passages of sordid and sorry capitulation to our worse selves, before which, if they stood revealed, love itself would flee astonished and affrighted. One only has trodden this earth who knew all, yet forgave all; He 'knew what was in man,' yet still loved him; with Christ utter knowledge was utter love. And in this infinite capacity for sympathy Christ is indeed God to us, for to know Him is to know the Father also."

How shall we make real to ourselves this sympathy and companionship of Christ in our time of need? How shall we find the Father with us in our hour of loneliness when all things human seem to desert us? I answer, by the diligent and habitual practice of that Presence at all other times in the day of ordinary life. If we would find our inner solitude, our Holy of Holies, radiant with the Shekinah when we are driven thither by the exigencies and accidents of life, we must retire there often in the midst of our hours of activity, and practise the presence of God. It is an old exercise of the spiritual life, intimately familiar to the saints of all ages, but much neglected by the modern Christian. Plainly and simply, the

secret of it all is the open but largely forgotten secret of prayer. Prayer is largely a lost art with the busy external and superficial modern Christian. He is a busybody, often, in his very beneficences. He is so absorbed in the bustle of activities that he has no chance to get acquainted with himself, much less with his God. He is frequently so cumbered with much serving that he rarely takes time to sit at the Master's feet, and learn of Him the one thing needful. He does not know how to commune or enter into fellowship with Christ; and that alone is real prayer. Not muttering forms, repeating liturgies, not even hurling unctuous and voluble extemporaneous petitions at the Throne of Grace, but the simple talking with God in the quiet solitude of the heart, the silent mingling of spirit with Spirit, the human with the Divine, which may find no words nor tongue nor even formal thought to utter its meaning, — this is prayer. We must cultivate a sensitiveness and responsiveness to the presence of God if we would realize it. Here sails a ship on the great ocean; possibly the atmosphere all about it is charged with the messages of wireless telegraphy. But if that ship would receive any of those messages, it must place at its masthead a receiver attuned to the instrument of the sender. Even so, God is ever ready with His peace of pardon for our sin, His comfort for our sorrow, His strength for our every need, His companionship for our inward loneliness; but if we would receive His messages, if we would realize

His presence, we must sensitize and attune our spirits to His spirit, and that can be done only by the practice of prayer.

It is at first a difficult and irksome exercise of the soul, this practice of prayer; but to master it it requires only patience and persistence, and when it is once mastered, it becomes to the soul the unfailing source of an unquenchable joy in the midst of all sorrow, of an inalienable peace in the midst of all tribulation, of an inexhaustible strength in time of need, — a well of water within springing up unto eternal life.

If you would be able to say with Christ in your hour of loneliness: "I am not alone, for the Father is with me," you must learn to practise diligently, habitually, in all the common hours of your active and crowded life, that other word of the Master: "When thou prayest enter into thy closet and shut thy door"; shut out the world with its bustle and demand, ay, shut out all friends and companions save One, and "pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

CHAPTER XV

LIMITATIONS

St. Luke ii. 12. "And this shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find a babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

THIS was the conclusion of the Angel's message to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains. It began with a great announcement: "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy which shall be to you and to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ, the Lord." Let us try to realize what that announcement meant to those who first heard it.

The Messiah, the Christ, was to be the focus of all history. In Him should centre all the preparation of the past; from Him should issue all the consequence of the future. For Him the centuries of prophecy travailed in birth. From Him the centuries of fulfilment should take their date. "This Child was set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel," and many more outside of Israel. He should lift empires off their hinges and set a new one in their places. He should inaugurate a new and world-wide civilization. He was to set up the Kingdom of God on earth. He should turn the currents of history into new channels. He should lift all hu-

manity to a new and higher plane of life. He should become to countless multitudes of souls throughout the ages both "wisdom and sanctification and redemption." His spiritual empire should be without geographical boundary and His reign without temporal limit. And the realization of this stupendous expectation we of the twentieth century have commenced to see in a very large measure. Jesus has at least begun to be and to do all that was prophesied and hoped of the Messiah.

Such was the announcement and its meaning. But how was this wonderful Being to be recognized? What was the sign of His coming? By what marks and characteristics should He be known? Hear the Angel's answer: "Ye shall find a babe" (for so the words really read, — not *the* Babe," but simply *a* babe), "Ye shall find a babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." These are astounding words, if we stop to think of it. The sign is simply no sign at all. There is to be no distinguishing characteristic about the Wonderful Child. He is to be just like any other Hebrew baby, clothed in the ordinary garb of infancy, the "swaddling bands" that were the fashion of the day, extraordinary only in the humbleness of his lot, cradled in a manger. As one has said, it is as if a stranger or foreigner, going for the first time to a reception at the White House, should ask: "How shall I know the President? How shall I recognize the Supreme Executive of the mightiest Republic of the world?" And the answer

would be: "Don't try to pick him out by the number of the decorations he wears on his breast nor by the splendor, the tinsel and gold-lace of his uniform. For then you might light upon the most minor attaché of the feeblest South American Republic, the under-secretary of Venezuela or Bolivia. Look for the simplest, plainest man there, clad in the most ordinary clothes, in the thickest of the crowd, shaking hands with everybody, high and low, rich and poor. That is the President."

Something like that is the meaning of the sign appointed of the Angel. "If you would find and recognize the Christ of God," it seems to say, "look not for some mighty Archangel seated upon a throne of glory; look not for some celestial Being, descending from the opened heavens; look not even for some princeling born in a palace, lapped in luxury, surrounded by regal splendors, with armies waiting on his call; look not even for an infant bathed with celestial light, as later artists shall picture Him. 'Nay, ye shall find a babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." It is the note of simplicity, of commonness, of ordinariness, even more of humbleness and limitation, by which the Christ-child is to be discerned. The angelic message and song, — these mark the internal significance and glory of His character and mission; but the manger and swaddling clothes, these symbolize the ordinariness of his external lot in life, and, even more, the narrowness of its limitations.

Let us think on these things for a while. "Ye shall find a babe," — a babe, the very symbol of physical weakness. There is nothing so feeble and helpless as a human infant. Jesus Christ came into this world cherishing the most stupendous personal ambition ever conceived or conceivable. No world-conqueror in the wildest flight of his imagination ever distantly approached that magnificent dream of Jesus. To Pilate's challenge, "Art thou a King?" He replied calmly: "Thou sayest it. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world." And what a kingship! He came to set up the Kingdom of God on earth, a Kingdom of which He was to be the spiritual sovereign. And His sovereignty was to be world-wide and age-long, and over all humanity. Ay, it would reach on into the eternities. Was there ever such an ambition as this?

And yet in attaining that ambition, He deliberately and distinctly repudiates all the ordinary symbols and means of sovereignty. Every kingship the world has ever known or attempted has rested ultimately upon force; all its sovereignties have depended finally upon the power of the sword. But Jesus puts away the sword, whether it be offered to Him by the Devil in the temptation of the wilderness or by His own disciples in Gethsemane or by the enthusiastic multitudes on Palm Sunday. He refuses the crown they would fain put upon His head. For "not by power and not by might" is the world to be won or the Kingdom of God to be established. From the

world's point of view, was there ever folly like this? Two things and two things only He will depend upon for His universal and eternal sovereignty over men. Those two things are the power of truth and the attraction of His own personality. To Pilate's inquiry as to His kingship, He declares its nature, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world to bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth will hear My voice." It was to be a kingdom of truth seekers, who should find the complete satisfaction of their need in the revelation He made and the Gospel He preached. Their loyalty should be a loyalty to the truth. But that truth should come, as all the highest and mightiest forms of truth always come, through personality. It was His personality that should give the truth its wondrous fascination and attraction for men. And it was that personality set forth in terms of worldly weakness, in simplicity and humility. "Come unto Me," He cries, "and learn of Me, that I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Ay, it was that personality set forth in terms of sacrifice, "I, if I be lifted up, lifted up on the cross of sacrifice, will draw all men unto Me." And so, in large measure, has it come to pass. Every one, whatever be his dogmatic opinions or creeds about His metaphysical Deity; every one who has the mind, the discernment for spiritual reality; and, above all, every one who has a heart susceptible to the winsomeness of Divine love, is drawn toward Jesus Christ by an irresistible attraction.

Truth and love, — these are the forces to which Jesus confidently commits the future of His sovereignty, these are the foundations upon which with calm assurance He builds His Kingdom. And the world is slowly beginning to realize that these are the only powers which in the end prevail among men; these are the only foundations upon which any permanent authority can be based. "Every one that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword." Every kingdom founded on force shall fall by force. All human history has been one long comment and explication of those words. One of the shrewdest diplomats and statesmen of Europe once declared, "You can do everything with bayonets except sit on them." And the Czar of Russia is finding that out. You may compel humanity to do many things temporarily by physical force. But you can establish permanent power over men only as you win from their hearts their voluntary and enthusiastic love and loyalty. And human loyalty and love can be won by two things only, truth and personality. So "hath God chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty" and the Christ hath established His Kingdom among men, not by the compulsions of physical force, but by the inspirations and attractions of faith and love.

And it was "a babe, lying in a manger" which the shepherds were to find. This was the child, not of affluence, but of poverty. The Maiden-mother was so poor that she could find no home for her first-

born save a stable and no cradle save the manger where the ox and ass did feed. He was laid in a cattle trough. And this Child grew up to an inheritance of poverty; He voluntarily assumed a life of meagreness such as few of our most abjectly poor in this prosperous nation and age know; He lived on alms. By his own confession "foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head." In plain words, He was a vagrant, having no local habitation or visible means of support. Should He appear in our streets to-day as He did in Jerusalem of old, He could and probably would be arrested and brought before the police court on that charge. And yet it is He who proclaims as His mission to men, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," or, as the words ought to be translated, "the abundance of life." How foolish, how like mockery, that proclamation from such a source sounds in our modern American materialistic ears! What a contradiction in terms it is! We are accustomed to measure the abundance of a life by the abundance of its possessions. A man is *worth* so much when he *has* so much. We say that a man is making a fine living when he is accumulating much goods, not when he is doing much good. *Things, things, things;* stocks, bonds, lands, houses, gold and silver, furniture and food, — these and the like are our equivalents for life and the abundance of it. And yet how often, yea, how generally, men and

women are forced to confess that *things*, however abundant, can never bring the abundance of life. Stocks and bonds, lands and houses, gold and silver, furniture and food, — these can never buy joy and peace. They can never buy life. It is a dreary truism which men find out by bitter experience for themselves, but which none will take on authority from any other.

But there was One Who "while having nothing, yet claimed to possess all things." And He has made good His claim to all the world. For He measured the abundance of life in the only terms in which it can ever be really measured, — not in the "abundance of things which a man possesseth," but in the abundance of its spiritual qualities, the width of its views, the reach of its outlooks, the wideness of its ideas, the height of its ideals, the depth of its peace, the profoundness of its satisfactions, the richness of its experience, the wealth of its service, the inviolability of its joy. And in these things His life was rich beyond all description. He was forever proclaiming His independence of things, His conquest over circumstances, His victory over the world. He was ever singing His song of peace and joy even under the shadow of His cross. And it was not only a personal possession, it was a communicable property. It should pass by inheritance to them that were His spiritual kin. "My joy give I unto you, and your joy shall be full. And that joy of yours no man taketh from you." "My peace give

I unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

And not only was His poverty no hindrance, but a help, to His personal abundance of life; it was also not a hindrance, but a help, to the abundance of service, the wealth of blessing and efficiency which that life had for all the world. In these days we are most prone to think that without money nothing can be done in any large and efficient way for the blessing and help of mankind. Is any great movement on foot for the saving of the lost, the uplifting of the fallen, the setting at liberty of them that are bruised, the binding up of the broken-hearted, the proclaiming of the year of deliverance to them that sit in darkness? Then institutions must be built, campaigns and propaganda carried on, organizations run, and so on. All that requires money, and money in abundance. Now institutions are necessary and money is a powerful instrument for good in right hands. But the worth of its use depends on the right hands. Personality counts for immensely more than money. And every now and then God takes affairs into His own hands, picks out His man and shows us how much, how infinitely much, can be done by personality, pure and simple, bare-handed as it were, without any means or instruments; that He may show us how little things count in comparison with a man, how much

more "a man is worth than a wedge of the fine gold of Ophir."

Did you ever try to make a catalogue of the world's greatest benefactors, the names that really live in the benediction of the whole race? If you ever do, you will be surprised to find how very few of the rich in this world's goods there are among them; how the vast majority of them had to say with those simple Galilean Apostles of old, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee." And so just because they had no silver and gold, they gave what was vastly better, ideas and ideals, wisdom and knowledge, inspiration and aspiration, vitality and faith and hope, service, and, above all, they gave themselves. The brilliant material benefactions at which the public gape in admiration soon perish, and with them the names of those who gave them. But the devoted scientist or physician who, perhaps at the peril and even cost of his own life, has won the conquest over some grim destroyer that once devastated whole communities; the student who has enriched the world forever with a new vision of truth; the artist who has glorified life with new beauty; the statesman who has stricken the shackles from the slave; the patriot who has won liberty for his country; the reformer who has solved some grievous social or economic problem; the humble philanthropist who has blazed the way into some new field of social service; the preacher who has given all human life new meaning and inspiration;

the missionary who, perhaps, through his own martyrdom has redeemed a continent or a race from cruelty, barbarism, and heathenism; the simple doer of duty and giver of himself who has made the whole world better by his living in it; the quiet saint who has lifted the ideal of mankind by simply being what he was, — how these shine forever in the firmament of humanity! And chief among all these stands the man Christ Jesus. Without any of the things the world usually depends upon, without money, without organization, without instruments or means, with nothing but Himself, His personality, and His truth, by the aid of a few fishermen and peasants only, He set on foot the mightiest movement for the highest good the world has ever known and lifted the race to a new plane of outlook, of blessing, and of life.

And lastly it was a babe, "wrapped in swaddling clothes" that lay in the manger of Bethlehem. Fortunately, swaddling clothes have gone out of fashion in our Western civilization. The very term has become obsolete, and needs explanation. They consisted of long enswathing bandages, much like those which fasten the Indian's papoose to its board, absolutely forbidding all freedom of movement to the limbs and sometimes dangerously constricting the vital organs. So the Virgin-mother clothed her baby; for it was the fashion of her day and people, — the best she knew.

The swaddling bands seem to me to stand for all the confining limitations that hedged in on every

side the human life of Jesus. Did you ever stop to think how narrow, how meagre, how barren and confined, that life was when measured by any of our modern standards?

This Man set deliberately before Himself a world-wide mission. And yet He was born and brought up in a backwoods mountain village, more crude in its manners, more contracted in its horizons and narrow in its interests than the remotest hamlet of our Western country; as crude and narrow as only an Oriental village can be. It became a proverb even in that dull day and desolate country, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" Our enterprising young men from the country districts feel that if they are going to do anything or be anything worth while, they must get out of the confining, monotonous life of their native villages into the wider, freer, more interesting life of the great world. Jesus stayed steadfastly in Nazareth for thirty years until the signal for beginning His career sounded. For if His life there were shut in outwardly on every side, it was open inwardly and upwardly. And even in Nazareth, God was God and men were men. And so He could and did learn from God and men even there. How short was that ministry. We cannot get time in a long life to finish any of our feeble designs, if we have any, and so we leave them unfinished. And yet He wrought what lives forever in those three years, and said at their close, "It is finished." He belonged by race and blood to a

feeble and despised people. Save for one brief excursion to hide himself from His persecutors, He never in all His life went outside the narrow boundaries of one of the smallest and obscurest provinces of the Roman Empire. And yet there is no trace of provincialism or even nationalism in anything that He does or says. His message, like Himself, is absolutely universal. It speaks to the heart of the American, the Englishman, the man of every nationality to-day, as directly and powerfully as it did to the heart of the fisherman of Lake Galilee nineteen hundred years ago. And it is as applicable to and efficient in all the complications of our modern Western life as it was amidst the simplicities of that ancient Oriental life. He had no position in society. He was a layman, not an ecclesiastic; a peasant, not an aristocrat; a man of the people, not an official. He had no leverage of place, authority, or influence to add to the power of His simple personality. The officials of His day, particularly the ecclesiastics, could not understand it. They were continually pressing Him for some disclosure of His official authority. And He could give them no answer, for He had none. Yet He spoke with authority, as every one who heard Him felt: and it was a tremendous authority; for it was the authority of a God-given truth and a God-inspired personality. He set it boldly against all that was most sacred among them, — tradition, culture, Church, and Bible. He had no learning, except that which He got at His peasant

mother's knee and at the little synagogue school of Nazareth. And yet He confuted the wise by a wisdom that comes from on high to the pure in heart.

Within such narrow conditions did He accomplish His infinite mission to reveal God, to manifest the ideal of humanity, and to redeem the world. All the limitations that confined His life into such narrow boundaries seemed but to intensify the power of His personality, just as the ribs of steel that hold the steam within the boiler and cylinder direct it mightily and efficiently to its appointed work. What does all this teach us? What does the sign of the swaddling bands mean to you and me?

First, there is a philosophy much prevalent in these days which declares practically that *things make men;* that every human being is simply and wholly the product of his heredity multiplied into his environment. Even the greatest of the sons of men, it affirms, can be so accounted for. Given such and such inheritances, such and such possessions, and such and such surroundings, and you will inevitably have such a man. It is a dreadfully materialistic and depressing philosophy. And yet it often seems most plausible, even in the case of some of our greatest and noblest. That philosophy has tried its hand, also, on the Supreme Man. Given the ecstatic expectations of the age and the ages back of it, given the religious fervors and genius of the people Israel, and Jesus Christ is their natural product.

But it seems to me that the slightest analysis of the life, the character, and the work of Jesus Christ, and the world in which He grew and lived amounts to a reductio ad absurdum for such a philosophy. Against this rock such a philosophy is hopelessly wrecked. For Jesus' world, Jesus' environment, serve simply as a foil which brings out in startling contrast the unique originality of all that He was and said and did. I can explain Him only as the Word made Flesh. In Him God hath stepped into the human race for redemption and salvation. On the very lowest grounds He can be accounted for only as a God-possessed man with a God-inspired message. And it is that Truth and Personality which make Him forever the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." So is Christ Himself the Christian's sufficient answer to all the scepticism of the age.

But second, there is a lesson for ourselves in this sign of the swaddling bands. What is true of Jesus in a unique and supreme degree may be true of every one of us in his measure. We, too, through His grace and power may declare our independence of things and circumstances. We, too, through Him may be conquerors over our environment, victors over our world. We, too, can make our very limitations helps rather than hindrances to our mission and our tasks. We can be what we were meant to be, and do what we were intended to do, though the whole world seem to be set against us. Almost

every one has doubtless said to himself every now and then, "Ah, if I but had that man's wealth, or that other's learning, or so-and-so's width of experience or wealth of opportunity or endowment of ability,—ah, then what would I not do for the service of God and the blessing of men; what could I not have of joy and peace for myself; what could I not be to the world, to God, and myself? But with my narrow and meagre life, with my small capacity, with my little opportunity, with my contracted environment, with my one talent, what can be expected of me?" But it is the coward's excuse. For whatever we have not, we always have God and our own souls. However our lives may seem shut in outwardly on every side, they can always be open inwardly and upwardly. And the narrowness that confines our opportunity may but intensify our personality, if we will have it so.

When Moses was called to his great task, he pleaded as excuse his lack of equipment. And God asked him, "What is that in thy hands?" (It was only a shepherd's crook.) "Take that, for with that thou shalt do wonders." So God says to you and to me, "Take what thou hast of means, of opportunity, of ability, and be and do what thou canst." And with Him we can do and be all that He means us to do and be. For it is men that count, and not things, in God's warfare.

> "This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:
> There spread a cloud of dust along the plain,

And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled and swords
Shocked upon shields. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backwards, hemmed by foes.
A craven hung along the battle's edge
And thought, 'Had I a sword of keener steel,
That blue blade that the king's son beareth —
But this, — blunt thing.' He snapped and flung it from his hand,
And lowering crept away and left the field.
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore-bested
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout
Lifted afresh, he hewed his enemy down
And saved a great cause that heroic day."

CHAPTER XVI

THE PARTIAL VIEW

Numbers xxiii. 13. "And Balak said unto Balaam, 'Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them; thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all: and curse me them from thence.'"

You recall, doubtless, the fascinating story from which the incident of the text is taken. The children of Israel are on their march from the wilderness into the promised land of Canaan. On their way they must needs pass through the country of Moab. Balak, the king of the land, becomes panic-stricken at the sight of this great host of aliens in the midst of his domain. He seeks an offensive and defensive alliance with Midian against the invaders. But an established alliance was not enough. He dare not trust the arm of flesh alone. Therefore he sends for Balaam, the seer or wizard of Mesopotamia, who is a servant of Jehovah, the tribal God of Israel. Balaam, tempted by the rewards of divination, comes and tries his spells and incantations. But all to no avail. He cannot curse Israel. God's seer must see God's vision; and "God hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither perverseness in Israel."

At last, when all the priest's tricks have failed, Balak, the worldly-wise, bethinks himself of a device. He

will take the wizard to a low side-hill, whence he can get but a partial view of the hosts of Israel, thinking that perhaps by means of that partial view Balaam may be able to deceive himself and conscientiously utter his maledictions. "And Balak said unto Balaam, 'Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them; thou shalt see but the utmost part of them and shalt not see them all: and curse me them from thence.'" It is a transparently simple and childish trick, and yet it is one eminently characteristic of human nature. We all again and again practise Balak's device. All our partisanship and nine-tenths, if not all, of our pessimism come from deliberately chosen *partial views* of men and things, partial views of the world and history and life. And all fairness and righteousness of judgment, all peace and hopefulness of heart, belong to him alone who persistently and patiently and determinedly climbs high enough to get whole views.

For instance, our political Balaks, the party bosses and distributers of favors, "the rewards of divination," gather about them their Balaams, the eloquent stump-speakers and platform orators, the brilliant journalists and other intellectual flunkeys. And each wizard climbs his Mount Ebal, his hill of cursing, from whence he gets his poor, partial, and distorted vision of the opposing party's camp, — a camp, by the way, which contains perhaps one-half of his fellow-citizens, on the average fully as earnest and con-

scientious and honest in their convictions as those on the seer's side,—and thence proceeds to launch his maledictions. The atmosphere is thick with the vituperations, the slanders, the abuse, the curses, of these modern diviners for hire, hardly so conscientious as the Balaam of old. We eat and drink and breathe prejudice while a political campaign is in progress. Who can calculate the debauching, depraving effect of one such campaign upon the mind and judgment of the average voter who does not think for himself, but swallows without question all the statements of his party's spokesmen? It blurs his vision for all truth, and warps his common estimate of men and things. It saps that primal element of all true manhood, the love of truth and fairness. It weakens the very intellect, because it substitutes prejudice and passion for reason as the guide of thought and action. Your out-and-out partisan wants no rational grounds for his action, nor arguments and evidences upon which to base his judgments. Labels are all-sufficient to him. To call a man a Republican or a Democrat, or a policy socialistic or plutocratic, is all that is necessary for complete commendation or condemnation according to his chosen point of view.

But partisanship is not peculiar to the world, even the world of politics. I sometimes think that the Church has been its favorite field. The broad, high plains of Christian life and work have room enough and to spare for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ

in sincerity and would serve God and man in the power of that love. But these great commons are surrounded on every side with little low side-hills affording partial views; and upon every one may be found some Balaam, or group of Balaams, often men of talents and gifts, of brilliance and learning, ay, often men of conscience; but each content with his partial vision, nay, more than content, for the more he can deceive himself thereby, the better his trade and position, the greater the admiration and reputation he bears among his followers, the better Churchman he is esteemed. Therefore he takes due care not to sweep the whole horizon, lest he thereby weaken his peculiar zeal. He will not seek to understand his brother's vision of the truth, lest he dampen his ardor for the theological strife. Out of the half-truths of his partial view he weaves his whole misrepresentation and launches upon the air his invectives and anathemas. And behind every such Balaam stands his Balak, his sect or denomination, his school of thought or the party in ecclesiastical politics which pays him his rewards of divination according to his zeal, his emoluments of position or his titles of distinction, his support, or perhaps barely his meed of admiration and applause. And so the side-hill of peculiar convictions becomes the mount of cursing. Ah, who can calculate the harm of such strife and controversy; the utter blinding of spiritual vision and insight brought about by that bitterest and most inveterate of all hatreds, the *odium theologicum*, —

the warping of character, the destruction of Christian charity, the thwarting of Christian work and endeavor, the undermining and wrecking of faith among men, the contempt brought upon religion, all because the representatives of Christ have been content simply to stand and curse each other from their little side-hills of peculiar tenet instead of climbing the great central peak, the mount of beatitudes, even the plain essential Gospel of Christ, from which alone the full vision can be seen. I think that the greater part of our infidelity and atheism is due to such causes.

And yet there is a secret, lurking admiration for the partisan, whether political or religious, in all our hearts. Why? Because he is the man of conviction, the man of decision and action; he is the positive man. All the world admires the positive man. There is no shilly-shallying about your out-and-out partisan, no perpetual weighing of balancing considerations, no continual halting among deliberations that never arrive at conclusions. He believes, decides, acts, accomplishes. And yet, partisanship is not necessary to positiveness of character, to conviction and decision and consequent prompt, energetic, and effective action. Principle may be more powerful than policy or party. Look at Christ. The controversies of His day swirled about Him like a great maelstrom. Parties, — political, ecclesiastical, religious, — the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, constantly pressed upon Him on every side. By

cunningly laid snares and traps they tried to inveigle Him into partisan positions and declarations; they tried to make a partisan out of Him. But they could not do it. And yet He never resorted to evasion. He never wanted in decision or conviction. He never hesitated, shilly-shallied. His vision was always clear, His speech plain, His action prompt and decisive; He was ever positive, intensely positive. Why? Because He had ever before Him the clear vision of essential truth and righteousness. Whenever they tried to crowd Him into some low side issue of party policy, as in the matter of the tribute money, of the inheritance, and in every case, He always rose forthwith to the high ground of eternal principle, and on that ground he stood firm. There is the type and example for the true Christian. He who would be a worthy disciple of the Master can never be content with the partial and distorted vision of partisan policy, whether in Church or State. He can never take his stand on the low ground where the fogs of prejudice and passion cloud the outlook. He must ever follow His Master to those lofty peaks of essential principle, of eternal righteousness, with their broad views which sweep the complete circle of the horizon. There alone can any whole view of truth be gotten, and therefore there alone can vision be clear, decision sure, and action free and certain.

But arising from these partial visions there is a sin of pessimism as well as a sin of partisanship, the pessimism that cuts the nerves of the will and the

sinews of action, that saps the springs of energy and chokes up the fountains of joy. Nine-tenths of such pessimism comes from these partial views of life. Men often deliberately take up low standpoints off at one side of the great field of human life, and then because from thence they get and can get only poor, miserable, and distorted visions, they curse the society in which they live, the civilization that surrounds them, the lives that are given them, and, by implication, if not directly, the Providence that is over all and the God who made all.

For instance, a man takes the standpoint of the daily press, particularly that of our yellow journalism. And from thence he views our modern society and civilization. It seems to him one weltering mass of iniquity. Wherever he turns his eyes, he beholds only "oppression, lust, and crime." For that is what the newspaper, particularly the "yellow journal," chiefly concerns itself with exploiting. It is largely the daily record of the world's "oppression, lust, and crime." Of the great industrial, political, and social army, of the vast forces and hosts of civilization, it beholds but "the uttermost part," the mixed multitude of camp followers that always hang upon the outskirts of every great army, the riff-raff of knaves, parasites, and villains that surround society like a tattered fringe upon a garment. Naturally that is all that can be seen from such a standpoint. With such a vision before his eyes no wonder that he curses civilization and society. No wonder that

he is sure that the world is steadily going from bad to worse, and that destruction and perdition cannot be far off. No wonder that despair fills his heart.

But there are higher standpoints than that of the daily newspaper; and from these broader and longer outlooks may be had, outlooks full of promise and of hope.

Of the present there are broader visions possible than those of the yellow journal. For while crimes trumpet themselves into publicity from the housetops, virtues instinctively seek the closets of retirement. Let a great act of oppression or injustice be done in the industrial realm, and instantly it is lifted up into the light of day, and a chorus of angry voices rises so that all the world may hear. But let some man of conscience who has put upon him some pressure of tremendous responsibilities conduct his affairs with uniform justice and fairness and treat those dependent upon him with kindness, consideration, and brotherly love, and the fact is buried in oblivion by the modesty of the master and alas, too often, also, by the ingratitude of the men. The press concerns itself for the most part only with the extremes of society in the slums and on the avenues, and while it may often be true that society is rotten at the top and at the bottom, yet the great silent mass of the people who never get into the newspapers and who constitute the heart of society are, for the most part, sound and true. The marriages that are fail-

ures are published in the divorce courts, but the countless unions of true and faithful love the public never hears of. If a home is wrecked, the doors are flung wide open and the crowd invited in to feast their eyes upon the ruin; but the loving and happy family hides its joy by its own hearthstone. The point that I want to make is just this; that while the world is bad enough, God knows, yet it is infinitely better than it seems to be from the standpoint, say, of the public press; for while undoubtedly more evil exists than gets into the papers, yet it is still more true, vastly, vastly more good exists than ever gets into those same papers.

And there is also a longer as well as a wider view to be gotten from the higher standpoint. It needs the perspective of history to judge rightly of human society and God's Providence. We cannot reasonably expect the infinite plan of the All-Father for His human family to be all unfolded and made clear to our vision upon the one infinitesimal point upon which we stand, the point of the present. It will require nothing short of eternity to exhibit all that plan, and it takes a long perspective of the past to discern the fine lines of progress upon which that plan is working toward the great consummation. But to the student who will toil up the heights of historical research, those lines come out clearer and clearer as he climbs higher and shape themselves into the outline of a vast and infinitely wise and beneficent design. And as he looks out from his high watch-tower, he

can even measure the majestic tread with which humanity marches along the appointed way that leads to that goal. It is like watching the flow of the river or the advance of the tide; there are swirls and eddies and retrogressions now and then; there are waves that dash high, only to break and retreat, so that he who stands too near or is too impatient to wait, sees no progress; but all the while the current and the tide are steadily forging onward.

Be not presumptuous, therefore, in your judgment of God's world or of His Providence over it. Do not make haste to curse it because from the low standpoint you just now chance to occupy it looks purposeless and hopeless. It is only when you get into eternity and can stand beside God Himself that you can get the whole vision which alone can justify a complete judgment. At least, therefore, seek now the highest attainable viewpoint, — the viewpoint which may give you the broadest and longest outlook possible, — for that alone can save you from the paralysis of pessimism.

One word more. There is a personal and practical pessimism which is far worse than this general philosophical pessimism. There is a despair about one's self that is vastly more blighting than any despair about things in general. This, too, comes from the partial vision. Some horror of great darkness sweeps over your life. Some great sin has swept you in the throes of despair. Some heavy bereavement or affliction falls swiftly and crushingly upon you.

Some grievous disappointment or trial breaks the heart within you. And the clouds of doubt and despair cover your sky and darken the light of heaven. Your faith is gone. God, if there be a God, has forgotten you. He has no concern for you, no Providence over you. Your life has become a dreary waste, an apparently pathless desert, in which you wander aimless and objectless, treading wearily in the heavy sand, but making no progress any whither because there is no goal anywhere to be reached. And something whispers in your soul the advice of Job's wife, "Curse God and die." Ah, my brother, my sister, beware! Do not judge life or God hastily by what you can see in the one hour of darkness and the valley of despair. Wait and trust. Wait and trust until God has had a chance to justify Himself to you. He can no more unroll all His infinite plan for that one human life of yours upon this infinitesimal point of the here and now than He can make plain to you His whole plan for the universe. Wait until you can climb some loftier height of faith and trust, until you can plant your feet upon that rock that is higher than you, the Rock of Ages, the revelation of God's love in the Gospel and Person of Jesus Christ. Ay, wait for your *final* judgment until you shall have scaled the peaks of eternity and stand in the unveiled presence of God, for only here can you get the complete vision of life. And sure I am that even the most wretched, miserable life this weary, groaning world has ever borne in its

bosom, must bless God instead of cursing him for calling it into being, when once from those heights of eternity and in that light of God, it gets the full sweep of the horizon and catches the complete vision of life.

There has been just One Who had that perfect vision here below, and that was Jesus Christ. All the mysteries of human sin and wrong met at the foot of His cross. All the burdens of human suffering and sorrow were laid upon His personal, individual life. And yet no shadow of doubt or despair ever rested upon Him, except perhaps for the one flitting moment on the cross when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" His words never wail with the lamentations of pessimism. Nay, rather, they ever sing not simply with the joy of hope, but with the joy of certainty. They ring with triumph. They shine with the glow of perfect peace. And why? Because He alone of all mankind had the complete, the whole vision of life, the vision that could belong to Him only who "dwelleth ever in the bosom of the Father." He saw it all from the beginning to the goal, clean through all its mysterious enigmas on to the perfect consummation of the Father's infinite love and wisdom. Let us try to share in our degree His perfect vision, and we shall also share in our degree His perfect peace. Let us climb after Him every height of trust and faith that lifts itself before our feet, and we shall find it a mount of beatitudes instead of a hill of cursing; until we

stand at last with Him upon the summits of eternity in the unclouded glory of the Father's presence. And so from first to last, in ever increasing measure, up to the perfect illumination, "in His light we shall see light."

CHAPTER XVII

THE UNIVERSAL CHRIST

Acts ii. 7–8. "And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, 'Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans, and how hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born?'"

"THE day of Pentecost was fully come." The dispensation of the Spirit had begun. The Holy Ghost was given. And this was the sign of it; the Apostles spake the message with which they were charged by the Divine afflatus, and the mixed multitude heard it, "each man in his own tongue wherein he was born."

There were certain of the early fathers of the Church who interpreted this miracle of Pentecost as a miracle of hearing rather than as a miracle of speech; that is, they held that instead of the Apostles being "given the gift of divers languages" as the Prayer Book puts it, their hearers were given the gift of "divers hearing"; so that each heard the one message in his own tongue wherein he was born.

Whatever we may think of this interpretation of the Fathers, even if it sounds fanciful in our ears, it at least suggests and symbolizes a great truth. Let us see if we can apprehend that truth.

Whenever a man speaks "with a tongue of fire,

as the Spirit gives him utterance," men everywhere will understand him, whatever diversity of speech or other superficial differences divide them from him. That is the suggestion of many a mediæval story. For example, the great Bernard, preaching the Crusade, speaks in unintelligible Latin, and yet sways his vast audiences of barbarous Germans to tears and enthusiasm, to high resolve and self-devotion. Possibly, too, in profounder form, it is shadowed forth in the legend of St. Francis of Assisi preaching to the birds and fishes.

Perhaps some of us here to-day have had the experience of being overswept with variant emotions by the intensity, fire, and pathos of some eloquent orator whose foreign tongue we could not understand. These are but suggestions or symbols of the fact that underlies this interpretation which the Fathers put upon the miracle of Pentecost. And that interpretation stands for a yet profounder truth; namely, that when once you get down into that innermost and basal region of our common humanity, which is ever the sphere of the Spirit's operations; that region where abide the essential wants and needs of our common nature, all that really makes us human, — there you will find great open and unobstructed channels of communication between man and man, between soul and soul, through which sweep freely and mightily the tides of common sympathies, the currents of the spirit, whatever barriers of division may separate us upon the surfaces of life.

There is no foreigner or stranger in the land of the soul, — all are one in a common humanity. The heart has but one tongue. Its sorrows and joys, its profound experiences, are the same in every heart. Laughter and tears are the common speech of humanity.

This is the secret of the universality of the religion or dispensation of the Spirit. And here, also, lies the final test and, I may say in the light of nineteen Christian centuries, the highest proof of our Christianity. It is the only possible catholic or universal religion, because it is the only religion that appeals to the universal human heart. Thereby it is proved to be the religion of the Spirit. As the right key fits all the wards of the most complicated lock, so does the Gospel of Jesus Christ satisfy all the manifold needs of our common human nature.

Nation after nation, people after people, soul after soul, in all the Christian ages, of every land and clime, of every condition and station in life, of every grade of culture or education, — a vast mixed multitude, — look up continually to the Christ and His Apostles, and say with wonder and amazement, "Behold are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we then every man in our own tongue wherein we were born?"

Did you ever stop to think of the marvel of it? Here is a religion whose origin can most certainly be fixed in an obscure corner of an Oriental land among an insignificant Semitic tribe at a definite

point in what is now ancient history. Both its founder and all its first preachers belonged wholly to that land, that people, and that time. And yet, the religion they gave to the world is neither local, temporal, or national; it belongs to no one time, place, or people, simply because it belongs alike to all times, places, and peoples. It bursts all limitations, geographical, ethnical, or secular. It divests itself of all local or temporal coloring. The Christianity of Christ cannot be said to be Galilean, Jewish, or Greek, Asiatic or European, Oriental or Occidental, ancient or modern, because it is essentially universal, catholic. It adapts itself to every varying environment in which it may be set, and yet never loses its essential character. It clothes itself with the peculiar institutions, with the cult, with the worship, with the philosophy, of every age or people to which it addresses itself, and yet at heart keeps true to its original character and ever reiterates its primal proclamation of ethical and spiritual truth. It speaks alike to the heart of sage and peasant, of saint and sinner, and yet never loses its identity. The message is ever one and the same; but each man "hears it in the tongue wherein he was born."

This cannot be said of any other religion the world has ever known. We are trying some interesting experiments in these days with certain other religions. We import duty free (for there is free trade in religion if there is not in anything else; and as these foreign religions come to us frequently without any

particular ethical obligations attached, they are cheap religions), — now and then, I say, we import, duty free, samples of various foreign religions and try them in our soil. There is Buddhism, for instance, which under the name of Theosophy is quite a fad in certain circles. It is cultivated diligently, but it takes root only in the hothouses of certain eccentric minds. Why? Because in this prosaic, unphilosophical, this busy and practical Western world of ours, it is plainly an exotic. It bears about it all the local and temporal coloring and atmosphere of the ancient East. It consists in a cult and a philosophy which belong distinctly to the dreamy Orient, and its devotees instinctively, so to speak, orientalize their speech and their very habits of thought. It cannot appeal to the universal human heart, for it is not gifted "with the tongue of fire or the utterance of the spirit." It speaks not the language of the universal soul.

Contrast with that the Christianity of Christ. His religion is essentially neither a cult nor a philosophy, neither a ritual nor a theology, though it must and does always clothe itself with both; it is always adopting the garb of the age and the people among whom it dwells, always speaking to each in its own tongue, but ever continuing in spirit and essence the same, and reiterating its original message.

And what is that spirit and essence of Christianity, what is its fundamental message? Let us look quite at random in the New Testament. Here, for

example, is one of its most characteristic utterances, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Is there anything Oriental or Occidental about that, anything either ancient or modern? Can you find a people or an age in which the deepest longing of the human soul is not to know God, ay, and also in which that soul will not recognize instantly by instinct that the surest path unto the knowledge of God lies, not through philosophies and theologies, the labors of the intellect, but through the blessed experience of the obedient life; that God is to be found, grasped, and known only by those faculties of spiritual apprehension, those perceptions and sympathies, which belong only to the pure in heart? "He that doeth the Will shall know the doctrine." "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Or, take again that sublime picture of the attitude of God toward the sinner, the parable of the Prodigal Son. Does it speak only to the heart of the Jew of Palestine to whom it was first addressed? Nay, whensoever and wheresoever a sinner shall be found on this earth, — and where is the age, the clime, the people, or the individual where the sense of sin cannot be found, — whensoever and wheresoever a sinner shall be found, then and there does this parable speak with power to the hearts of men.

Again, the Christ holds out His hands and cries, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon

you and learn of Me that I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." When and wheresoever there shall be one heart bowed down under the burden of existence, weary with the endless endeavor of living, heavy laden with sorrow and sin, craving for peace (and what heart is not), there and then shall the human soul leap up in glad response to this promise of its Master. "'I am the resurrection and the life' saith the Lord, 'he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.'" And so long as men face the dark mystery of death, they will turn for the light of life to Him Who spake these words.

And behind all His words stands the Christ Himself as the very soul and essence of His Christianity. He calls Himself the Son of God; He calls Himself the Son of Man. He declares Himself to be the sufficient revelation of the Father and the perfect norm of humanity. Now conceptions of deity and ideals of humanity vary with ages and nations, with the degree of development and culture in any particular time and people and individual; and yet wherever Jesus Christ has been truly preached, — not caricatured by man-made dogmas, but set forth simply as He is pictured on the pages of the New Testament, — there all other ideas of God and ideals of man have instantly bowed before Him; there the deepest and truest instincts of the universal human heart have risen up to claim Him as indeed the one sufficient revelation of God and the only perfect type of humanity. To quote the words of another, "The

mind of man cannot conceive the time when He shall not be the fair ideal of all perfection, the object of humanity's purest devotion and adoration. He can never be superseded; He can never be exceeded. Religions may come and go, the passing shadows of an eternal instinct, but Jesus will remain, the standard of the conscience, the satisfaction of the heart; Whom all men seek, in Whom all men shall finally meet."

And yet while Jesus Christ thus "abideth the same yesterday, to-day and forever," and while His appeal finds the universal heart of humanity under whatever breast it may beat, yet each people, each age, ay, each individual, still must apprehend Him ever according to its own light, its own capacity, its own environment, and its own experience. It must translate Him and His revelation into its own vernacular before it can get any vital hold thereon. Doubtless some of you may recall the story of Mozoomdar. He was a cultured East Indian, you remember, who once found the Christ in the New Testament, — or rather that Christ found him, and became to him "the standard of his conscience and the satisfaction of his heart, the object of his devotion and adoration." Full of his new enthusiasm, Mozoomdar came west to England to see how this Christ he had learned to love and worship was understood by the peoples who had known Him longest. But he found Him translated into a religious philosophy, a dogma and theology, which were unintelligible to his Eastern mind and into a

cult, as well, and a worship which did not appeal to his Eastern heart. He went back to his native India, therefore, and gave to the world a picture of the Christ as the typical Eastern saw Him. He portrayed the Oriental Christ; that is, the Christ of the Gospels, interpreted into the mystical philosophy of that Eastern land, and so made intelligible to the Oriental mind and heart. It seems to me that our missionaries might take a leaf out of Mozoomdar's experience, and I am thankful to say that more and more the most enlightened of them are doing so. A Christianity arrayed in Occidental vesture can never win the heart of the East. The theology of the Westminster Confession or of the Thirty-nine Articles, stained and colored by the controversies of mediæval Europe or England, will never appeal to the Oriental mind. Nor yet can a cult which expresses itself in Gothic architecture or Anglican or Roman ritual express the devotion and worship of the Chinese or Japanese soul when once that has been touched by the Pentecostal spirit. We must be content in our missionary work to present the simple Christ of the Gospels, and then leave our converts to clothe that Christ and His Gospel in their own philosophy and symbolism.

Yes, Jesus Christ "abideth the same yesterday, to-day, and forever" and yet he arrays Himself in the garb and speaks the language of each people, each age, each individual soul, to which he addresses Himself. And therefore we have an Oriental Christ

and an Occidental Christ, a Christ of yesterday and a Christ of to-day, — ay, your Christ and my Christ, — for each must hear the word in his own tongue wherein he was born. For example, each of us receives the Christian faith first on bare authority, from the teaching of the Church in the Sunday School or at the mother's knee. There it is, practically the same for each of the Church's numberless children, — ay, persistently the same from age to age, — this faith of authority, this "faith once for all delivered to the saints." It is transmitted from generation to generation unchanged in its outline. The ancient forms still suffice, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the old, old story of the Gospel. Each young disciple may lay his lesson, his faith so received, down beside every other's, and match them. So the Apostles all beheld the same revelation in the Word Incarnate, so they all heard the same teachings from those Divine lips. And yet you find variety of apprehension even in the New Testament. Contrast St. John's interpretation of Christ and His teachings as set forth in his Epistles with St. Paul's, St. Peter's, and St. James'. The pure white light of the essential Gospel is broken up into prismatic rays by their variant apprehensions.

So it is also with the individual disciple to-day. By and by "the day of Pentecost is fully come"; by and by the age of spiritual maturity and understanding arrives. And with the expansion of experience, if there be any vitality or growth to the spiritual

life, the faith of authority must pass into the faith of personal conviction. And, lo, with that transformation the Creed has become personalized, so to speak, and the very Christ Himself has become individualized. My creed is not your creed, though we do say the same words Sunday after Sunday before the altar. My Christ is not your Christ, though we read the same Gospels daily. To the scholar, the student, the theologian, to whom everything presents itself primarily as a problem of the intellect, Christ is largely the metaphysical Christ of dogma, and the Gospel is interpreted into a religious philosophy and system of doctrine. And even in this language of theology there are all varieties of dialect, the tongue of the conservative traditionalist, and the tongue of the liberal, the tongue of the ecclesiastic and the tongue of the radical; and each must needs "hear in his own language wherein he was born." To the plain and simple Christian to whom everything presents itself as primarily a problem of life rather than a problem of thought, the Christ is the vital Christ of experience and the Gospel a Gospel of life. Again, in that interpretation there is every variety of vernacular. To him to whom life seems all duty, the Christ is the Master whom he serves and the Gospel the law of his obedience; to another to whom life is all conflict with temptation, the Christ is the Saviour from sin and the strength of the weak when "the blast of the terrible ones is as the storm against the wall," and the Gospel the trumpet-call to

battle; to another to whom life is chiefly endurance, the Christ is the support of the faint, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and the Gospel the source of secret consolation in the midst of prevailing sorrows, the unfailing spring in the desert. The same great tender Presence walks with us all along the common ways of life, and yet the touch of His healing hand rests differently on every soul. The same grave, sweet message falls on every ear, but the accent and emphasis of the utterance, the tone of the voice, ay, the very meaning of the words are other to you than they are to me. The peculiar needs of each individual soul find their own especial answer in the Living Christ and give their own especial color and interpretation to His teachings. To all alike he says, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest," and in response to that gracious invitation every heart that knows sorrow and burden bearing — that is, every heart that is human — leaps up with a sob of joy. But my sorrows are not your sorrows nor my burdens your burdens; therefore the strength He gives me for my need and His consolations that abound in my sorrows make a different peace in the midst of the turmoil and strife of my life than that which He bestows upon you. He offers Himself to all alike as the Saviour of the soul; but the temptations that surround me and "the sin that doth so easily beset me," are not yours, and therefore He becomes my Saviour in a different way than He becomes yours.

Ah, the blessedness and the richness of this religion of the Spirit when the day of Pentecost has once fully come to any soul, when the faith of authority has passed into the faith of experience, — how individual and personal it all becomes; how to each soul the one great Divine Christ begins to become his own personal friend and Saviour; how each begins to hear the familiar message, the old, old story, "in his own tongue."

The characteristic note of the dispensation and religion of the Spirit is not uniformity; that belongs only to the old, dull, dead faith of mere authority, — but it is unity in diversity. It is the one Christ, and His one message to the soul, become personalized and individualized to your soul and to mine, even as it is written, "There are diversities of gifts but the same spirit, and there are differences of administrations but the same Lord, and there are diversities of operations but the same God that worketh all in all."

Let us not, therefore, on the one hand try to force our peculiar Gospel or even our personal Christ, dear and precious as they may be to us, on any other soul; rather let us give our simple message to our brother and leave it to him to be interpreted by living experience as he shall be taught of the Spirit. That is the only way to inspire a living faith. For ourselves, let us never rest content until our "day of Pentecost be fully come." Let us abide patiently in our Jerusalem where first we learned our faith of authority, waiting with watching and prayer the

promise of the Father until we too "be endued with power from on high," until the Spirit shall descend upon us and our faith or authority be quickened into the higher faith of personal conviction, until we learn to know our Christ with that heart knowledge which is born only of a vital experience. Then shall we understand that deep mystery of the religion of the Spirit, that miracle of Pentecost, — namely, that "though all these that speak be Galileans," though our Christ be the same old Christ Whom we learned to believe in with our brother at our mother's knees; though the creeds be the same which we say in common with all our fellow-Christians, — yet each shall "hear in his own tongue wherein he was born."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SUPREME VALUE

St. Matthew vi. 33. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

I TAKE my text from the Sermon on the Mount. You remember its language. No portion of Holy Writ is more familiar. It has written itself indelibly on almost every memory. It is such exquisite poetry, such lovely sentiment. Particularly it goes so well with music. And so we sing it much in anthems and offertories, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," etc. It appears frequently in sweet books of devotion, particularly of devotional poetry, — dainty volumes bound in white morocco, with crosses on the covers and gilt-edged leaves, found much on ladies' boudoir tables. Occasionally we even dare to preach about it on a Sunday. But I am sometimes afraid few of us take it very seriously or ever think of trying to live by it on Monday. For though it goes well with music, it goes ill with practical living, — at least, with our common theories and ordinary practice of living. It is fine china to be kept like bric-a-brac on parlor mantelpieces under glass cases. For the kitchens of life, where the cooking is done, we need tougher

ware, earthenware. It collides with the hard facts of the everyday world, and fine china won't stand such collisions. Considered as a guide to be seriously followed in actual living, Christ's philosophy of life as set forth here in the Sermon on the Mount is impracticable, if not impossible. That is what many of us feel in our hearts when we read it, even if we have not the courage to say so with our lips. For though we be all theoretical Christians, though we assert our belief in Christ formally and dogmatically in our creeds on a Sunday, yet it would seem often as if we were practical infidels on week-days. For the most part it is only the theological and ecclesiastical Christ that we believe in, the Christ who is as unlike the real Christ, the Jesus of the Gospels, as the saint in the stained glass window is unlike the real man who walks the street. We tacitly refuse to follow Him along the common ways of life, for we are convinced in our hearts that He is an unsafe guide; He would lead us into folly or ruin.

Why, think for a minute of some of the precepts He gives us here: "Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink or wherewith shall we be clothed?" Most of us take thought of nothing else from morning to night, day in and day out. We have got to. If we do not, we shall starve. Life is so strenuous. The struggle for existence is so fierce. So many, indeed the majority, are forced to the wall in the struggle for existence.

It is all very well to tell us to live as carelessly and thoughtlessly as the birds and the flowers. It certainly would take the crows'-feet out of our eyes and the furrows off our foreheads. It would keep the hair black and the heart young. Yes, this life of a happy-go-lucky freedom is most attractive. We look at it and sigh. But in this present world of absolutely necessary worry and care, it is not for us.

But is Christ then such an impractical and impossible guide in actual everyday life as we know it and must live it? Is His philosophy here inapplicable to the world that we now dwell in? Before we decide, let us look at it a little more closely and get nearer to the heart of its meaning.

Christ is here dealing with comparative values. He is taking the accent and emphasis of life off from the lower values, upon which it is so commonly misplaced, and putting it on the highest things, where it belongs. And in so doing He uses the proverbial form of speech which habitually overstates its point in order to make it strong and clear; and therefore cannot be taken with all the exactness and literalness of a proposition in mathematics.

We commonly use such language. For example, here is a conscientious Christian business man, confronted with the opportunity of making large and sudden profits by shady methods; but he puts it indignantly away from him, saying, "Money is nothing to me, but my peace of mind is everything." He does not mean thereby that he is absolutely

indifferent to the value and uses of wealth, but that he proposes to put first things first, to keep the accent and emphasis of his life rightly placed, and that, compared to the integrity of his conscience, any amount of wealth is worthless to him.

Now the question Jesus is dealing with here is, "What is the supreme, the paramount, value in life, upon which the chief stress of its emphasis should fall, the one thing needful beside which all else sinks into comparative insignificance?" The chorus of common voices declares, "The main object of life is to make a living." We work in a circle, we live to make a living, and we make a living to live. The one thing needful is to get food, drink, and raiment; something to eat, something to drink, and something to wear, and a house to live in. Upon this the whole stress and accent of life are commonly set. With the vast majority of mankind it is the food, drink, and raiment of mere subsistence that is the one concern. God pity them; the pressure of the fierce struggle for existence is so terrible that they can think of little else. We have made them mere brutes and beasts by our unjust social and economic conditions, and then we curse them for being brutes and beasts.

But when that first problem of mere existence has been successfully solved, when the means of subsistence have been all provided, does the concern of life then begin to centre upon its higher moral significance and spiritual purpose? When the

necessary living is made, does the man begin to think about the life? Nay, in nine cases out of ten, the struggle for necessities then simply passes on into the struggle for luxuries, just as fierce, intense, and absorbing as the other was. Food, drink, and raiment having been obtained, sufficient for all normal and wholesome living, the one concern is for more or finer food, drink, and raiment. It may be now *pâté de foie gras* instead of salt pork, champagne instead of beer, silk and broadcloth instead of corduroy and calico, mansions on the avenue, and villas and palaces in Newport, or camps in the Adirondacks, in place of the humble home on the back streets. But the object of life has not changed; it is still as materialistic as ever; it is still "making a living." Its tone has not risen one inch; it has rather sunk. For necessities are surely a worthier object of effort than mere luxuries, and the poor often live a higher life than the rich. Many people have no other conception of the enlargement and enrichment of life when the opportunity comes to them than the multiplying and complicating of its material luxuries. There is no moral or spiritual purpose or meaning to it in their eyes. Their paramount concern is still, not life, but a "living." They are so busy making a living that they never stop to think about the life. They live in a circle as well as reason in a circle. And consequently existence becomes deadly dull and maddeningly monotonous, no matter how frantically they "seek

out new inventions" and make to themselves novel pleasures and fresh amusements. It is the old problem with which the "Preacher" wrestles in the Book of Ecclesiastes, the wheel of life returning continually upon itself, and yet no progress is made. There is no profit, no surplus, no outcome or issue to such an existence, no escape from that blind alley, that closed circle of self. Did you ever consider how absurd, how ludicrous, if it were not so pathetic, all this vision of our common life must appear to any higher, wiser beings who may be looking on, say, to the angels or to God? I think the question must occur to them often, "What is the use of making a living at all, if you are not going to build a life thereon — a purposeful, meaningful, serviceable life? Better be done with all this strenuous strife and endeavor, better starve and get out of the way than cumber the ground with useless existence." It is as if a company of sculptors should spend all their time and effort providing pedestals, — some able to get only rough boulders from the wayside, others polishing and finishing fine shafts of purest marble, — but nobody thinking of carving a statue to set thereon. Or as if a company of painters busied themselves exclusively with finding and stretching their canvases, some getting only coarse sacking, others silks of the finest web, — but nobody ever painted a picture.

Now Jesus is saying here, "Don't bother so much about the pedestals and the canvases. They

are absolutely insignificant beside the statues and the pictures. These are the paramount concern." The roughest boulder that carries a noble statue is better than the finest shaft of polished marble that carries nothing. The coarsest sacking upon which some rude but great etching has been sketched is better than the most delicate silk which is absolutely blank. So the meagrest living upon which a life of human service and spiritual significance is built is infinitely better than the most luxurious existence which but cumbers the ground with its purposeless and useless occupancy of space and time. Therefore, do not bother about the mere making of a living; do not spend yourselves upon the material basis of things, but *live a life, live a life.* Here is the escape from the closed circle of self; namely, into the will of God and the service of humanity. Here are the moral profit and spiritual surplus which alone make life worth living.

But Jesus climbs to that great and final comparison by gradual steps. He pictures it first in specific details, which make it very concrete.

"Why take ye thought for meat?" He asks, "Is not the life more than meat?" Many do not agree with Him, apparently. For they live to eat rather than eat to live. The purpose of their food is not simply to give strength and vigor and energy for service, but just to tickle the palate. What if their indulgence of the flesh impairs vitality and all but destroys the efficiency of their lives? What if their

impossible viands and banquets ruin digestion and temper at once, and make them intolerable beasts to their companions and families? They live to eat. Their god is their belly.

"Why take ye thought for raiment?" He asks again, "Is not the body more than raiment?" But the woman of fashion thinks not so. Her body is to her, often, like the lay-figure in a milliner's window, something to display costumes on. It matters not if that body must be deformed, made ugly, injured in its vital functions, so long as she can successfully exhibit the last striking style set by the demi-monde of Paris. And so it comes to pass, as William Morris has aptly put it, that many of them are "not decently veiled with drapery, but bundled with millinery; not clothed like women, but upholstered like arm-chairs."

How absurd, how ridiculous, our common life becomes in its most concrete details when we have not the courage or the faith to follow Christ, because, forsooth, in our superior worldly wisdom we consider His philosophy of life unpractical and impossible!

Yes, "the life is more than meat and the body is more than raiment." So far, perhaps, most of us in our sanest moments will follow Christ theoretically in His science of comparative values. But what is the *supreme* value upon which all the accent and emphasis of life should be concentrated? What is the paramount issue to which everything else must give way? What is *the* first thing which we

must always put first and subordinate everything else to it? Jesus answers, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." Or, as another translation puts it, "The righteousness, the rightness, thereof."

What is this Kingdom of God? I do not believe that that great term is used, as some think it is, to indicate simply and exclusively the Church, at least the actual Church as an ecclesiastical organization. The ecclesiastical organization is but the scaffolding for the upbuilding of that Kingdom among men. And the ideal Church of the prophet's and seer's vision is but, so to speak, the architect's plan for that Kingdom. But the Kingdom itself is more and bigger than either. And Jesus does not mean by these words "Seek first the Kingdom" that every man is to neglect his business and every woman her household in order either to attend services or do technically Church work. Nay, every man in his ordinary pursuit out in the world, and every woman in her usual vocation in the household or society, may be perpetually "seeking first the Kingdom of God and the rightness thereof," if only he or she will. For the "Kingdom of God," to use Bishop Gore's terse and pregnant definition, is, "Human society as organized according to the will of God," just as "the world" of the New Testament is "human society as organized apart from the will of God." It means the will of the Father-king "done on earth even as it is in heaven." Now to take up your

ordinary daily work, whatever it be, as a ministry of human service fitting into that great plan of God for a redeemed universe, and to do it to that end, to set that high purpose and ideal over it all and be absolutely faithful to that, cost what it may of success or gain, whether in the form of wages or profits, to eliminate the mercenary motive and substitute that spiritual purpose, — that is to "seek first the Kingdom of God and the rightness thereof," in your common occupations. There are certain professions in which that standard of the Kingdom is already established, at least theoretically and ideally. The Christian minister who seeks only comfortable livings, respectable parishes, fat salaries, and trims his message to catch pew-rents or subscriptions, is rightly scorned as a hypocrite; while the bold prophet who faithfully delivers the whole Word of God as it is revealed to him is secretly respected by all, though he have but meagre support and by some be scornfully denominated a crank and a fanatic. The artist who works for mercenary ends, who paints and carves and builds simply to sell, thereby vitiates all his work and wins the condemnation of all true lovers and judges of art. He produces nothing worthy of the name of art. The physician who deliberately catches trade and extorts large fees by sophistries is branded as a quack. We even suspect the physician who advertises. Why? Because he is supposed to be animated in his work, not by the desire to make money, but wholly by the interests of science and the

love of the service of humanity; in other words, by the zeal of the Kingdom of God. The scholar who investigates only for reputation and glory and not for the love of the truth, and the teacher who teaches for hire and not for the culture of humanity, loses the respect of all. The hack-writer, the penny-a-liner, does not produce the best and most lasting literature. And the day is coming when any man will be just as much ashamed to confess that he is in any business solely to make money as the artist, the physician, the scholar, or the preacher. He will realize that he is there simply to serve God and his fellow-men. For mercenary motives, did we but realize it, spoil any work, — coal-mining, railroading, ditch-digging, — just as much as they do art, literature, or teaching. Any occupation whose sole inspiring motive is making money is essentially an immoral occupation. The lawyer who is always after fees will not do much to establish justice and equity among men. The day-laborer who thinks only of wages will not do square work. We can do any work well only in the degree that we seek in it, not merely food and drink and raiment, or their equivalent, money, but first the Kingdom of God and the rightness thereof.

Do you say that the ideal is impossible, and therefore the philosophy impracticable? I admit that in our present stage of social and industrial development it is difficult, perhaps exceedingly difficult, in some instances to live up to such an ideal. In a day when the common wealth of all is so largely

appropriated by a small number of individuals, and when the earnings of the many are diverted by special and class privileges into the coffers of the few so that three per cent of the population control ninety per cent of the necessaries of life, or the sources of them, — one does not always feel sure of a basis of material existence unless he pleases the possessors thereof and bends to mercenary considerations. The pressure of necessity upon certain classes in the community is so terrific; the strife of competition, the game of grab, for all is so intense, that it is hard to have a single thought above meat and drink and raiment. Even little children are ground up, body and soul, in cotton-mills and coal-mines to make dividends for greedy stockholders. Ah, some day humanity will look back upon this age with as much horror, will regard it as just as cruel and savage in some respects, as we now consider the age of the troglodytes. But the day is coming, in God's good time, when, under the reign of justice and equity, men will have to worry as little about the material basis of existence, food and drink and raiment, as the children in a well-ordered family worry about where their dinner or their beds are to come from. For the Heavenly Father hath provided more than amply in the practically infinite resources of the earth for all the wants of all His children. It is only our maladjustments and greed, or our laziness and incapacity, that make want anywhere. When that day comes, we shall have a literal fulfilment of

the great promise of our text, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and the rightness thereof and all these things shall be added unto you."

But even now, in our present society, it is possible, though sometimes difficult, to live literally according to Christ's philosophy of life. You and I know men and women who have the courage and faith to do it. There are scholars in the fields of learning and science, missionaries and philanthropists, physicians and social settlement workers, common friends of man in the fields of human need, who have turned their backs deliberately on every mercenary motive, who literally "take no thought, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink or wherewithal shall we be clothed," but who just give themselves wholly to the service of God and their fellows; and they do not always starve. They may not have villas at Newport; but they often live saner, fuller, and more joyous lives than some of those who do have villas at Newport. And what has been proved possible for them is also possible for every one of us in his degree and in his appointed field of service. Any life, any work, may be lifted to that high plane and be fitted into the great scheme of the Kingdom of God, if the man has the courage and the faith to say, "It is not primarily necessary that I succeed here as the world counts success; it is not even primarily necessary that I make a living; but it *is* necessary, above all, that I render the best and most efficient service possible to God and humanity, and that I be

absolutely faithful to my ideals of truth and honor, of justice and integrity."

Have you the courage and faith to accept and follow Christ's philosophy of life? Or, is all your life easily translatable into terms of food and drink and raiment? Does it all end in feeding and amusing yourself, making yourself comfortable? Or is there a moral profit and a spiritual surplus to that life of yours? That moral profit and spiritual surplus alone measure the value of your life. Are you spending yourself wholly on the pedestal, or are you carving a statue? Are you only making a living, however comfortable, elegant, and luxurious, or are you really living a life — a life of definite purpose, of high meaning, of spiritual significance and noble service? Are you putting first things first, — the life above the meat, the body above the raiment, and the Kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof above all? It is only as you do that that you can find the full fruitfulness of existence, the real joy of living, and the peace of God. It is only as you do that that you can be in the deepest sense of the word a Christian.

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